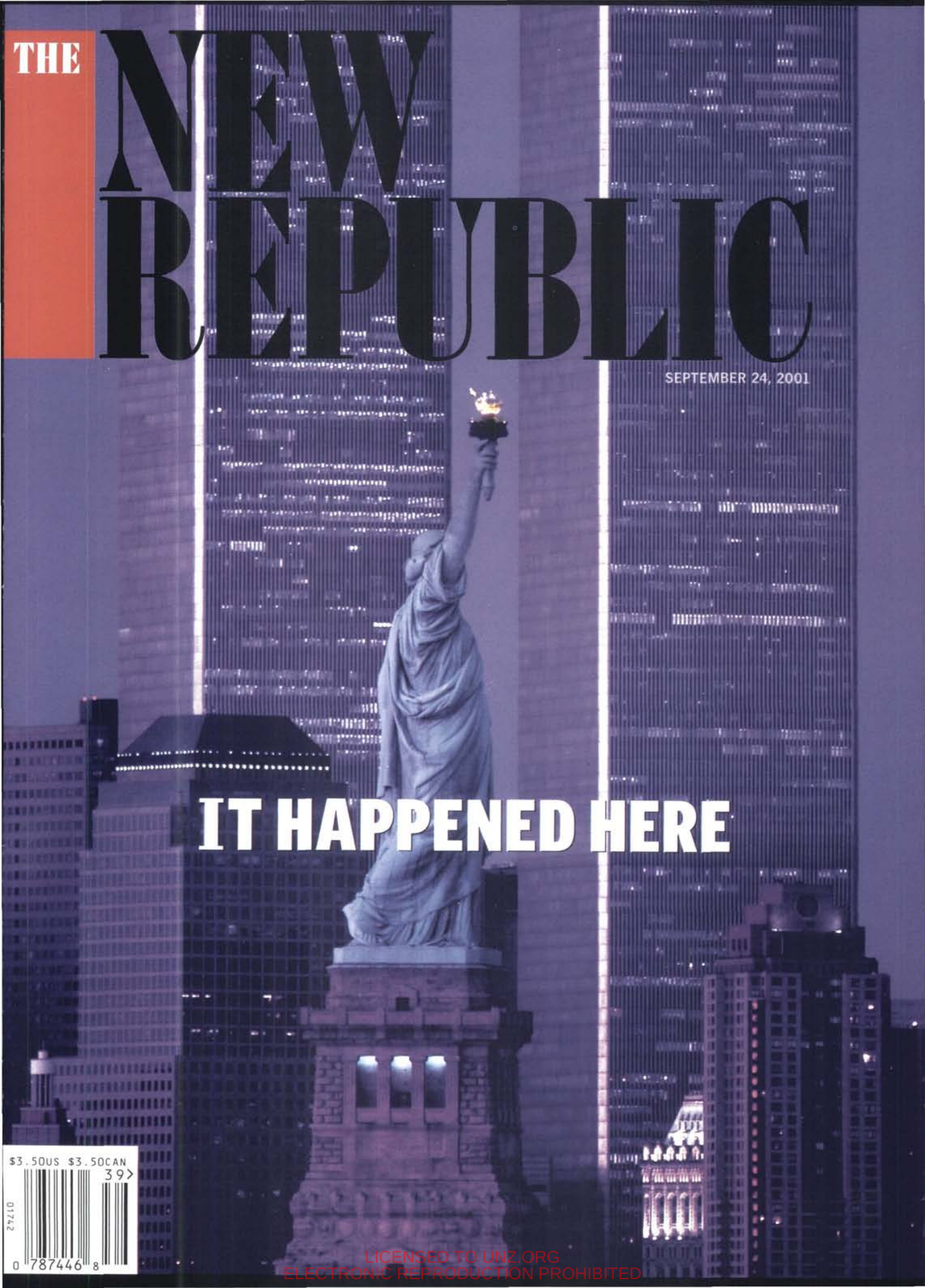

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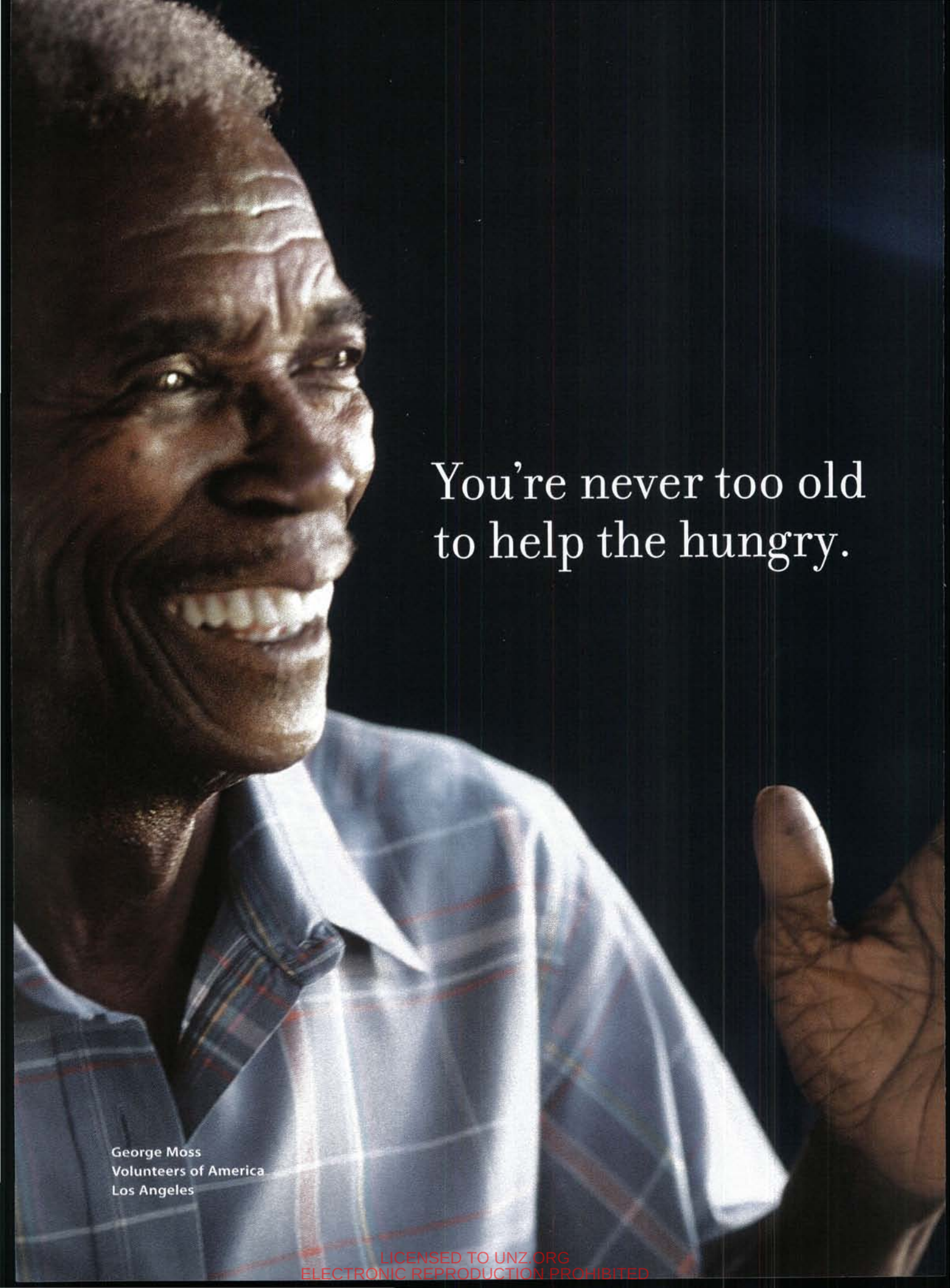

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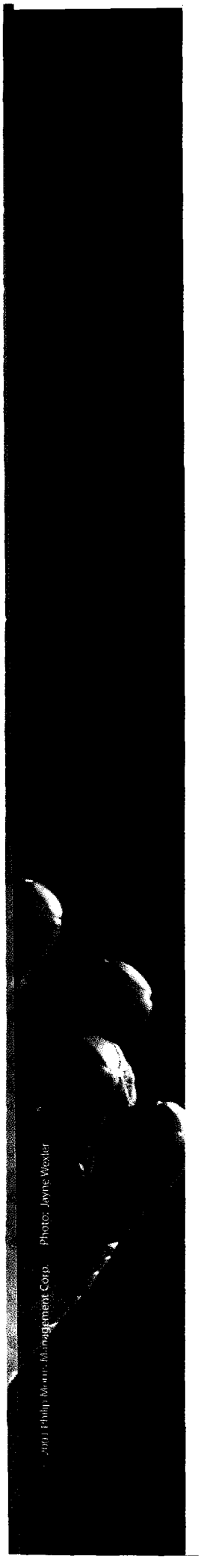

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Autohypnotized

TO THE EDITORS:

Robert Satloff's demolition of *The New York Times*' phony revisionism on Camp David is entirely on the mark ("Times Bomb," August 13). But, in treating this piece of bad journalism as a piece of bad journalism, he neglects an obvious point that is important enough to bear emphasis. Its purpose was only partly to persuade (or to create doubt) about responsibility for the failure of negotiations; it was primarily confected to be published, with fanfare, in the *Times* and thereby to become authoritative. Thus Anthony Lewis was able, a few days later, not only to praise and rely on the piece but to go beyond it in denying credit to Ehud Barak's government for the generosity of its offer. Pretty soon the tripe Deborah Sontag and Rob Malley retail will have become the conventional wisdom; the details won't matter, and respectable opinion will no longer be embarrassed for its Israel-bashing by any consciousness of its own dishonesty.

Politically, this process of autohypnosis needs to be fought; the best way to do that is to expose it. Psychologically, the Sontag piece raises the perpetually fascinating question of just how far ideologues can go without becoming aware of how cynical they have become.

FRED BAUMANN
Professor of Political Science
Kenyon College
Mount Vernon, Ohio

TO THE EDITORS:

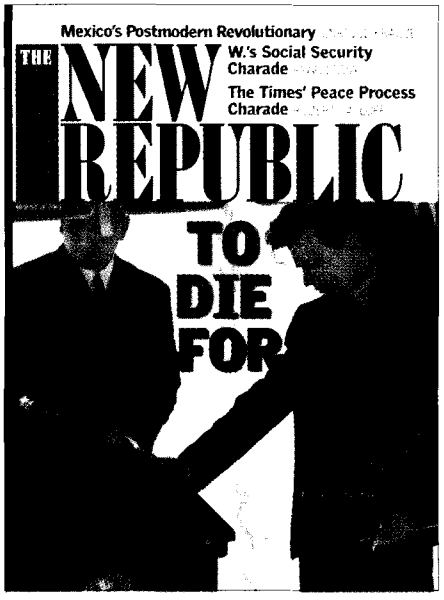
Robert Satloff's article is excellent journalism: He accurately reports on the situation in the Middle East and the distortions of that situation in the reporting of former *New York Times* Israel correspondent Deborah Sontag. Hopefully the *Times*' editors, after reading Satloff's excellent article, will decide that, to maintain its status as the national newspaper of record, it must use journalists who report the facts on the ground, not advocates. Editorials belong on the editorial page—not in the news pages.

STEPHEN M. STOWE, M.D.
New York, New York

Mies perceptions

TO THE EDITORS:

In "Mies and the Mastodon" (August 6), Martin Filler's sleuthing of details concerning Mies van der Rohe's flirtations in 1934 with the young Nazi regime—which he takes from a 1989 publication by the Museum of Modern Art on the architect's



politics in order to address what he calls "the mild stench of cover-up" regarding politics in MoMA's "Mies in Berlin" exhibition—is at once perverse and willfully inaccurate. The exhibit includes Mies's swastika-bearing designs for a German Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair rejected by Hitler and withheld by Mies over three decades later when he donated his archive to MoMA. Borrowed from a commercial gallery, this design is exhibited for the first time at MoMA in a scholarly and chronological presentation, although the drawings have occasioned much commentary and debate since their first publication by MoMA. Far from seeking to cover up, "Mies in Berlin" includes, alongside these political embarrassments, a number of little or totally unknown early projects in a traditional idiom, which Mies had likewise sought to expunge from the historical record for their questionable avant-garde credentials. The show's strict chronological presentation allows complexities and mixed signals in Mies's career—artistic, stylistic, and political—to emerge. And it avoids the type of sensationalist innuendo that pervades Filler's review, in which he implies that Philip Johnson's commissioning Mies in 1930 to design his New York apartment was somehow related to both men's flirtations with fascist power after 1933. It is a shame that Filler preferred to digress into a laundry list of other modern architects with less-than-spotless political records, while failing to note the Mies exhibit's extensive wall texts, which include much of the well-known information "revealed" in Filler's exposé. These invite the public to engage for itself in the complex task of relating the development of architectural form—particularly in an artist whose slow evolution of a design language over many decades of practice is by now legendary—to the rapidly changing political landscape, notably in early-twentieth-century Germany, where Mies worked under three radically different political regimes in as many decades. Filler's review is marred by an inability to keep his subject in focus (he even detects the German flag in the color scheme of the MoMA display, although there is, in fact, no use of black as he claims) but it does provide the frisson of a plot being hatched somewhere, even if the plot's precise motivation and nature are never revealed, even by the reviewer.

BARRY BERGDOLL
Professor of Art History,
Columbia University
Co-Curator, "Mies in Berlin"
Museum of Modern Art
New York, New York

MARTIN FILLER REPLIES:

What strikes me as "perverse and willfully inaccurate" is that, in such an otherwise admirable and comprehensive effort, no attempt was made in "Mies in Berlin" to fully confront the vexing issue of Mies van der Rohe's politics. Barry Bergdoll is understandably defensive at having that glaring lacuna examined, but the courage MoMA demonstrated in its 1989 book was missing from his and Terence Riley's overly cautious exhibition and catalog. Though "Mies in Berlin" indeed displayed Mies's swastika-bearing Brussels design, the three brief wall texts that mentioned his relations with the Nazis did so in the most cursory manner. Therein, Mies was portrayed as a victim of circumstance who was only following orders: The swastika was a requirement of the commission; he was asked to submit a scheme to the Reichsbank competition; and so on, as if he did not have the option of refusing. Furthermore, the longest and most direct of those labels was somehow deemed not important enough to be included in the catalog, the show's permanent record.

The unusually broad black mats surrounding several of the exhibition's largest drawings, set against red and yellow walls, gave me the strong impression of the tricolor Weimar flag, whatever MoMA's intention. In no way did I suggest that Mies's 1930 commission of Philip Johnson was related to their later "flirtations" with Nazism. Nor do I think there was a "plot being hatched somewhere," merely a conspiracy of silence. The motivation? To distance MoMA, Mies's chief institutional mythmaker, from any taint of his shameful past, to say nothing of that of Johnson, its architectural éminence grise. ■

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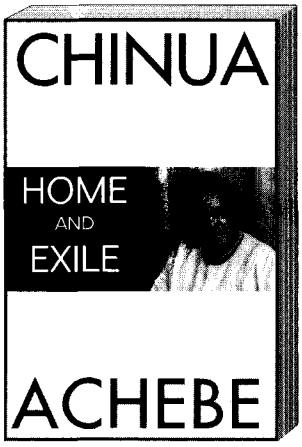

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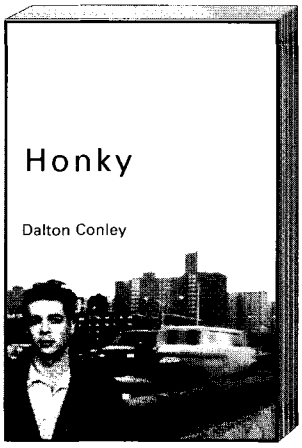

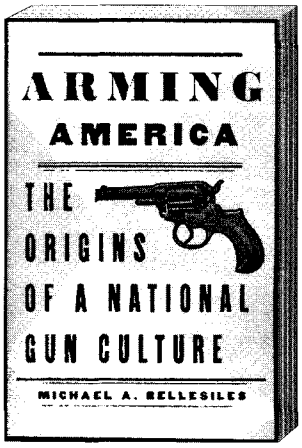

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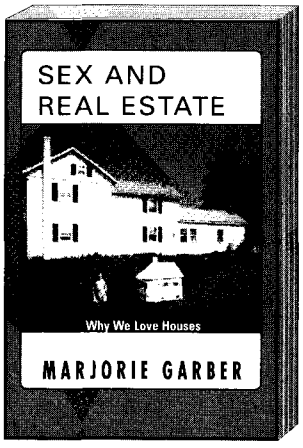

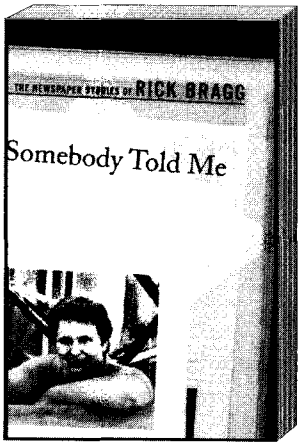

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Sidelines

"WORLD TRADE Centre ... anti capitalism ... anti globalisation ... was it one of us?" So read a Tuesday posting on *www.urban75.com*, a site popular with anti-globalization activists from around the world. And it suggests one small lesson we can draw from the cataclysm of September 11: The massive anti-IMF and World Bank protests scheduled for later this month in Washington must not take place. They must be canceled not because the writer of those words is correct; he or she almost certainly is not. But because it is even possible to ask the question. The anti-globalization movement is, in part, a movement motivated by hatred of the global inequities between rich and poor. And it is, in part, a movement motivated by hatred of the United States. Now, after what has happened this week, it must choose.

Am I conflating hatred of the United States with legitimate criticism of its government? You be the judge. Here are some snippets of the chat at *urban75.com*, in the first hours after the attack, while television and the Internet flashed scenes of the devastation in New York City. From a writer named "Buddy Bradley": "Can we draw one tiny element of goodness from this, in that it will maybe make America think again about its apparent invincibility in the modern age, or will this only serve to make them worse?" From someone called "twisted nerve": "Maybe this is what was needed to make a change for the better??? It was only a matter of time." Another correspondent joked, "looting anyone?" The Mobilization for Global Justice, the closest thing the D.C. protests have to an organizer, still called for demonstrators to "reclaim the capital city of the United States as a liberated zone."

In fact, some in the anti-globalization movement seem to loathe America so much that they embrace its enemies even when those enemies violate supposedly core movement values—like justice for the world's poor. In 1999, when French farmer Jose Bove ransacked a McDonald's to protest American domination, he became an anti-globalization hero. (Had Bove trashed a non-American company, even a non-American corporate giant, he would not have garnered a fraction of the adulation he enjoyed on the global left.) But if culturally, Bove is a warrior against American hegemony, economically, he's a warrior against the farmers of the Third World, whose exports France spurns as a result of its lavish agricultural subsidies and tariffs. Few of his supporters seemed to mind.

Or consider the movement's new bible, *Empire*, by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. If, as U.S. government sources suggested as TNR went to press, Tuesday's attacks were the work of Osama bin Laden, then anti-globalization activists will make the obvious point that the principles that animate their struggle and those that animate bin Laden's are completely different. But, according to *Empire*, that's not so obvious at all. As Alan Wolfe shows in a devastating review in next week's issue, Hardt and Negri reject the notion that Islamic fundamentalism is backward-looking, arguing instead that, like the anti-globalization movement, it is "postmodern." (In keeping with this upbeat assessment, Hardt and Negri do not call men like bin Laden ethnic terrorists. They call them "ethnic terrorists.") The two academics (one of whom is himself in jail for terrorism) write that "fundamentalism is postmodern insofar as it rejects the tradition of Islamic modernism for which modernity was always overcoded as assimilation or submission to Euro-American hegemony." And what is the anti-globalization movement itself rejecting if not "assimilation or submission to Euro-American hegemony"?

Except that in both cases, the "Euro" is basically irrelevant. Islamic fundamentalists such as bin Laden don't strike at France or Germany the way they strike at the United States. And for good reason: France and Germany are happy to buttress Islamic tyrannies. Neither their foreign policies nor their cultural exports represent nearly as great a threat to these regimes as do America's. And, similarly, the anti-globalization protesters see American capitalism as far worse than indigenous European varieties. When they refer to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as "Washington-based institutions," they are making a statement about more than geography. According to an analysis by 50 Years Is Enough, an activist network helping to coordinate the upcoming Washington protests, "the social democracies of Scandinavia and Germany" once offered "an encouraging alternative" of economic development and social organization. Guess which country they offered an "encouraging alternative" to?

Of course, not all the people preparing to demonstrate in Washington later this month see America as a global scourge. And many of them make no apology whatsoever for the bin Ladens of the world. The Mobilization for Global Justice's website read on Tuesday, in large type, "Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of this morning's tragedy and their families." And while many of the writers at *urban75.com* implied that, in some sense, America deserved it, numerous others simply registered their shock and grief. Even some of the activists who themselves seemed inclined toward violent protest were at pains to distinguish themselves from the people who attacked the World Trade Center. An "activist response to the crisis" sent across a student e-mail list insisted that "Anyone who was planning to go to DC should totally still go.... We can still smash the state in a way that's respectful to the lives lost, and [be] condemning of this senseless act of violence." An incoherent condemnation, perhaps, but a condemnation nonetheless.

The anti-globalization movement is not unified in its disdain for America. It is divided by it. But if the movement tries to shut down America's capital while that capital reels from foreign attack, it will be divided no longer: It will, in the eyes of the nation, have joined the terrorists in a united front. Since its inception, the American wing of the anti-globalization movement has hovered on the edge of this country's political system. Sometimes it has tried—as in Ralph Nader's campaign for president—to convince other Americans of the rightness, even of the fundamental Americanness, of its cause. Other times it has shown contempt—preferring to shock and insult mainstream America than to participate in democratic politics as loyal and responsible members of this national community.

On Tuesday that ambiguity became impossible. This nation is now at war. And in such an environment, domestic political dissent is immoral without a prior statement of national solidarity, a choosing of sides. By canceling the upcoming protests—and acknowledging that it is less important to ruin the meetings of the IMF and the World Bank than to let Washington recover—that is exactly the statement the anti-globalization movement would be making. And when peace returned and it came time to resume the globalization debate once more, their fellow citizens would remember.

PETER BEINART

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It Happened Here

"SENSELESS," "UNIMAGINABLE," "crazy," "unfathomable": as the World Trade Center fell and the Pentagon burned, those were the words that came to the lips of many Americans, on camera and off camera. We must beware those words. They have a way of carrying the war against us away from us, of fortifying our incredulity against the evidence of our eyes, of shutting down thought when thought is required, of lifting the obscenity that was visited upon America back out of the realm of possibility. But the legacy of September 11, 2001, must be nothing less than a new sense of what is possible. When those planes flew into those buildings, the luck of America ran out. And so we must finally allow ourselves to be sobered out of our sensation of historical and geographical immunity. We must not let the tremor of what we have seen pass from us. It happened here.

"Senseless," "unimaginable," "crazy," "unfathomable": these words that preserve the catastrophe as a black idiosyncrasy of American experience, as an event too unlike the way we live to be incorporated into the way we think, must be resisted also on other grounds. They are simply false. It is not true that the attacks of September 11 were unimaginable; and anyway imagination is no longer necessary, now that we have memory. It is not true that they were crazy, except by our standards and the standards of civilization; but those are not the only standards in the world. It is not true that they were senseless, because they made sense to the people who carried them out, and to the individuals and the movements and the states that supported them or applauded them. It is not true that they are unfathomable: they were actions with reasons. These evil deeds were the results of beliefs. If we do not comprehend those reasons and those beliefs, then all we will do is mourn our dead and heal ourselves back into the traditions of our complacence. History is asking more of this country than sorrow.

Let us start the rebuilding of our understanding of our place in the world by recognizing that we are living in a new era of anti-Americanism. This may seem surprising, in the aftermath of America's triumph in the cold war. "I am for peace," the Psalmist declared in bewilderment, "but when I speak, they are for war." This is America's bewilderment exactly. But perhaps the equivocal position of the United States in the post-cold-war world is not so surprising. For the victory of the United States, democracy, and capitalism demonstrated more than just their superiority to the Soviet Union, totalitarianism, and socialism. It was also a great demonstration of what used to be called American exceptionalism. The United States—and more generally the West, a geographical appellation that is really a moral appellation—was revealed to be peaceful and prosperous in a world that was more and more a political and economic shambles. A shattering difference in the fates of nations was made clear.

The spectacle of American happiness—we were pursuing what Jefferson instructed us to pursue and we seemed to be gaining it—provoked opposite reactions in the suffering regions of the world. Briefly, it provoked a love of America and a hatred of America. There were many who wanted an American happiness for themselves and their children, and they did what they could do to gain it. But there were many who chose to condemn what they could not attain—whose envy of America curdled into resentment, and whose resentment curdled into an analysis that made America responsible for the non-American conditions of their lives, and whose analysis curdled into ideologies of "resistance" against the symbols and the interests and the allies of the United States. This anti-Americanism had its spokesmen in America, too. "When will the smaller, lesser, weaker peoples," Edward Said wrote in 1999, during the American-led war to rescue Kosovo from extinction, "realize that this America is to be resisted at all costs, not pandered to or given in to naively?" That was the "progressive" question and the "progressive" vocabulary in the 1990s.

Does anybody doubt that the crusade against globalization is to a significant degree a crusade against the proliferation of American values and American practices around the world?

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For an alibi must again be devised: another wave of progress has come and gone, and many regions did not seize it. Instead they transformed the old charge that modernization was American imperialism into the new charge that globalization is American imperialism. The politics of anti-globalization has revived the old "North-South" analysis of the 1970s, a fatalistic and even paranoid view of social and economic failure that had the effect of trapping many states and societies in their failing ways. The United States has become once again the archetypal adversary of the wretched of the earth; and in the excitable warrens of militant Islam this conspiracy theory has been promoted into a theology, into an expectation of apocalypse. Thus it was that *Al-Ahram*, the government newspaper in Egypt, described the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon as the "beginning of a war against globalization." The editorial explained that "[t]he real reason behind the terrorism is the widening of the gap between north and south." Never mind that poor people do not generally become murderers, and that the lesser, smaller, weaker peoples have sent many more immigrants to these shores than terrorists. We must welcome the immigrants. We must extirpate the terrorists.

Anybody who hates modernity hates America. Anybody who hates freedom hates America. Anybody who hates privacy hates America. Anybody who hates human rights hates America. Anybody who hates ballots and bookshops and newspapers and televisions and computers and theaters and bars and the sight of a woman smiling at a man hates America. Osama bin Laden and the terrorists of Al Qaeda chose the United States as their target in perfect accordance with their beliefs. Philosophically speaking, we are their mortal foes and they are ours. But to the hatred of America they add another virulence, the hatred of Israel. In the same breath bin Laden calls for the killing of Americans and the killing of Jews. "We will see again Saladin carrying his sword," he ranted on a tape that surfaced this June, "with the blood of unbelievers dripping from it." By unbelievers, of course, he means those who do not believe what he believes: this is an enemy by whom we should be proud to be known.

The religious dimension of bin Laden's war against Zionism is perfectly clear. In his view, he wins heaven who wreaks hell. Bin Laden is waging a holy war, which is always the unholiest war of all, since it drags the most sacred things into its crimes. The common view is that he is seeking to punish America for its association with Israel, but the contrary is also the case. He wishes also to punish Israel (and Jews generally) for being so remorselessly American, that is, so secular, so liberal, so enthralled by enlightenment, so unimpeded by the burdens of the past. Israel poses the same threat to bin Laden's picture of the world, the same challenge to his horror of liberty and equality, as the United States does, and Israel is flourishing right there in the orbit of Islam. Its vitality represents a rebuke to its torpid region. For this reason, the terrorist war against the United States and the terrorist war against Israel is the same war. This is as it must be, for the principles of the United States and the principles of Israel are the same principles, the same brazenly modernizing ideals. If not for anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism, those two towers would still be standing.

THIS WEEK THERE does not seem to be anybody in America who does not agree that this is a war. Under the influence of those infernal images, the nation appears to have discovered the virtue of indignation. But can we bind this anger? It will not be easy. Americans are athletes of the emotions, and we live in a society for which anger is merely "healthy," that is, valuable for its lack of consequences. It is also true that the resumption of ordinary life is the only real victory over all this death. But this time the anger of America must not be regarded as just a sentiment, for it represents also a proper assessment of our situation. We *were* attacked. We *are* vulnerable. We *have* enemies. This *is* a war.

So how shall we fight this war? We cannot fight it as we fight other wars. Our adversary is not a state and not an army: the defense professionals warn of the difficulties of "asymmetric warfare." But surely one of those asymmetries is an asymmetry of power. We are spectacularly stronger and more resourceful than the suicidal cabals that have been formed against us. We require a lot more intelligence (judging by what happened last week, we require any intelligence at all) and a lot more cunning; but above all we must state clearly as a nation, to ourselves and to the world, that we are preparing to kill anybody who is preparing to kill us. Is this a policy of assassination? It is not, because assassination is too grand a term for the murder of murderers. It is a policy of self-defense. And it is not a policy of retaliation, but a policy of active and sustained aggression against all individuals and groups whom we have confidently identified as terrorists. These murderers may be in our midst, or they may be in Afghanistan or Iraq or Syria or Pakistan or the Sudan; but it is impossible to believe that we cannot find them if we genuinely wish to find them. President Bush was right to proclaim, moreover, that "we will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbored them." Our adversaries are not states, but they cannot survive or succeed without the support of states. It is time to raise the costs of such support. (It is also time for the Saudis

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to cease their filthy little games.) For pursuing such a policy, we will assuredly reap more hatred, but only in places where we are already despised; and behold what the absence of such a policy has already reaped.

The fires were still roaring at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon when the air began to fill with alarms about the morality of a serious campaign against terrorism. David McCullough preached on CNN that "I'm afraid that it will also mean a curtailing, trimming up some—maybe even eviscerating of the open society [that] we know." (This is the same man who is making a mint off an admiring biography of the author of the Alien and Sedition Acts.) The editorial page of *The New York Times* warned that "[t]he temptation will be great in the days ahead to write draconian new laws that give law enforcement agencies—or even military forces—a right to undermine the civil liberties that shape the character of the United States." Military forces? The editors of the *Times* have been spending too much time at Blockbuster. Who in the American government is suggesting that we tear up the Constitution or perish? The notion that we cannot destroy terrorism without destroying liberalism, or that the fight against terrorists transforms us into terrorists, is *bien pensant* demagoguery, and its only effect is to inhibit the already inhibited. Our security need not be purchased at the price of our scruples. Now we have been shown that we are not secure. Is there really no significant change in our national security policy that is warranted by what we have witnessed? If the charnel house of lower Manhattan changes nothing, then we will deserve to despise ourselves.

But in truth it is hard to speak of policy when all that fills the mind is tragedy. The ashes of Manhattan cover the entire land. The pictures wound and wound and wound. The planes slam every time for the first time, the buildings fall every time for the first time. Over and over our brothers and our sisters die. These are the records of a defeat, and of a derangement of the universe. Eloquence is stupid. We have been slaughtered. Even if we live in a culture of forgetting, this we must never forget. ■

Brooklyn Dispatch

Under the Bridge

By PAUL BERMAN

I AM WRITING seven or eight hours after the attack, and, through my study window in Brooklyn, I see black plumes still billowing from lower Manhattan. In the morning, from my rooftop, I watched the first flames encircle the twin towers and the black cloud float over the harbor. The smoke seemed oddly speckled with glinting white spots, which I at first thought might have been gulls. But they were papers sucked out of the burning buildings. Some of the specks were also, I later learned, human body parts. A silvery necklace as wide as a building seemed to drop from one of the burning towers. I thought it might have been part of the façade, tearing away. It was not the façade. The smoke cleared for a brief second, and the tower was gone. Below me, on Brooklyn's Atlantic Avenue, fire engines began to scream, trying to push their way through traffic into Manhattan.

By late morning huge parades of people from Manhattan had begun to make their way on foot across the bridges into Brooklyn and were dragging themselves along Atlantic Avenue, some of them still wearing masks over their mouths and noses, a white soot on their clothes and shoes. I went out into the street. Lower Atlantic Avenue has been a largely Arab district for some 70 years, filled with storefronts adorned with Arabic letters and names. Here and there among the crowd, people were hurling curses at Arabs and at foreigners. A round-faced man declaimed, "Don't let any more of these foreign Arabs come into this country no more! They hate us!" I stopped at a store where I know a clerk from Morocco. He has told me he admires the moderate and tolerant views of the late king of Morocco and of the new, young king. Now the clerk was standing taciturn behind the counter, his face compressed. Outside, the round-faced man was shouting, "We gotta get rid of all these foreigners!"

AT SMITH STREET a woman who said she worked near the World Trade Center stood on the sidewalk, dust on her clothes; she, too, spoke against the Arabs. "This is where all these hateful people live!" she said, gesturing up Atlantic Avenue. I asked her what she had seen. She said she had seen people hurl themselves to the ground from very high floors of the World Trade Center. "Where is Bush?" she said, exploding in anger. "Where was the Army?" She had seen a terrified old man on the Brooklyn Bridge, unable to walk any further because of his panic, clutching a pole.

I walked to the Brooklyn Bridge and tried to cross into Manhattan, but I was turned away by the police. I tried to cross on the Manhattan Bridge, and I got part of the way over the river before I was turned back again. So I joined the endless stream of people going the other way, into Brooklyn—the vast and varied crowd that resembled a crowd in almost no other place on Earth, faces that were African, Asian, Latin, European—the whole of mankind. A Hasid sped by on a roller scooter. Near Long Island University, the sidewalks were filled with students passing out water, as if to the runners in a marathon.

It was a gratifying scene of communal solidarity. But on Fulton Street, as I headed back to my home, I saw that the storekeepers had pulled down their metal shutters and the street was empty. A cop told me that looters had begun to run up and down Fulton Street. In exchange for that information, I told him a rumor I had heard from one of his colleagues on the Manhattan Bridge: that large numbers of cops could not be accounted for and were prob-

PAUL BERMAN is author of *A Tale of Two Utopias: The Political Journey of the Generation of 1968 (Norton).*

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ably buried under the twin towers. "Don't tell me that," he said.

At home I climbed back onto the roof. The view from my roof reaches from lower Manhattan to Prospect Park to the Verrazano Bridge, a vista of rooftops and skyscrapers and church steeples. Sometimes there I have thought of a poem by Baudelaire called "Correspondences," in which he proposes that man walks through nature as if through a forest of symbols, every new element representing some abstract and absolute idea. It is a notion that comes from the philosopher Plotinus in the third century. But I have often wondered if Baudelaire or Plotinus or anyone else with that id a had or has really been thinking about nature. For nature is not a symbol, though you can tell yourself anything you want.

But when you look out on a vast cityscape, you do see a forest of symbols. From my roof, gazing up Atlantic Avenue, I saw a Belorussian Orthodox Church, then the Reverend Herbert Daughtry's Pentecostal House of the Lord, then the former Ex-Lax factory, then the YWCA, a mosque, and, towering above all, the enormous Williamsburg Bank Tower, a temple to capitalism—a landscape that might have been painted by Saul Steinberg, each element charming and even comic in its idiosyncrasy. In the other direction, very far away, the Statue of Liberty, no bigger than my thumb, held her torch aloft.

Now a new symbol dominates the New York skyline, and the philosopher Plotinus offers the best account of it. According to Plotinus, evil is neither a demon nor Satan nor any kind of being. Evil is an absence. In the skyline now, there is an empty space where the twin towers used to be. I gaze out my study window, where I am used to seeing the towers, and I can hardly believe what I see. I see nothing. Smoke and sky. It is the symbol of absolute evil. ■

Manhattan Dispatch

Scrapped

By David Grann

By the time I reached the roof of my apartment building on 21st Street, one of the towers was already gone. All you could see was a plume of smoke. An elderly tenant, who lives in the penthouse, was leaning over her railing, blinking at it.

"Some fool flew right into it," she said.

The doorman, Miguel, pulled out a Polaroid camera and took a snapshot. "I saw the plane come right in and hit it," he told me. "It was too low."

We stood there for a while not sure what to do. More and more people came up. One tenant said he saw the first plane flying so low he thought it was going to land on the street; a woman, whom I occasionally exchange glances with in the elevator, said we were "under siege" by terrorists. Then the second tower came down. Everyone waited for a thunderous crash—one man even crouched behind the wall—but there was not a sound except for the wail of sirens and the tenant in apartment 5A, who said, "This is war."

After a while I got back into the elevator with Miguel. His Polaroid had just come into focus and you could see, through smoke, one of the towers still standing. "You'll never see that again," he said.

The police had blocked off our street with an armored car. On the roof of the police station next door I could see snipers, poking their rifles through crevices, even though there didn't seem to be anything to point them at. By then all the roads and subways were closed off and, though I had gathered up my reporter pads and recorder, I had no way of getting anywhere. On my way upstairs again, I bumped into a volunteer police officer in 16D who was rushing to the scene; though I had never spoken to him before, I asked him if I could tag along. "I'll get you as close as I can," he said.

We got in his car and switched on the siren. Uncertain how to get there, we turned down one road, then another, until we wound up on Second Avenue, where the police had created an emergency lane. We were swept into a long line of ambulances and fire engines, many with men hanging off the sides, or piled on the tops, heading toward the smoke now spreading over the lower half of Manhattan. As we progressed downtown, past the Second Avenue Deli at 10th Street and through the East Village, we could see more and more people coming toward us, a mass of humanity. They moved in a steady, almost orderly march. Occasionally we slowed to let a bunch pass. "Look at that man," said the cop driving me. A figure in an impeccable suit and tie was crossing in front of us. He looked as if he had just stepped out of a board meeting, except that he was blackened by ashes from head to toe. Some people had taken off their shirts and wrapped them around their mouths to protect them from the smoke, even as they carried their brief cases or cell phones. One person carried an umbrella.

By Lafayette Street the police had created an armed perimeter around the entire area and we parked by the subway station. Volunteer EMTs and doctors had gathered, but no more victims were arriving, and the stretchers lay on the sidewalk. As we passed through the first of several police barriers, the cop with me flashed his badge. He was a short, stocky fellow with a boyish face. He said he volunteered as an officer in Long Island, but that he "had never seen anything like this before."

As we moved deeper inside the perimeter, the sun seemed to disappear. The smoke stung our eyes and a fireman gave us surgical masks to help us breathe; on the ground, a thick layer of soot covered everything. On one of the cars someone had written in the ashes with his finger TRIAGE HERE, with an arrow pointing into a building, now abandoned. The smaller streets, leading to the World Trade Center, were empty save for firemen. At one point we came across a car, still idling, left in the middle of the road. We also saw a deserted fruit stand. Finally there was an open-

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ing in the row of buildings through which we could see, only 100 or so yards away, where the tower once stood, nothing but a mass of rubble.

Police cars and ambulances that had arrived for what they believed was the beginning of the rescue now sat cracked in half, their interiors still in flames. Several workers tried to put them out, their hoses stirring up the soot so that the few people in the vicinity rushed backward. A policeman removed a gas mask and said into a radio, "Haven't been able to find John. I'm still looking for John. We're still looking for John."

"I can't find my company," another fireman said.

THERE WERE NO wounded visible, nor even the sound of a human cry. A man came by on a bicycle carrying a bucket filled with bottles of Evian water and little boxes of Visine, which he passed out. Several firemen took the bottles of water, sipped from them, and then poured them over their heads. We stood there for a long time, watching, and then an older man stumbled out of the smoke. He didn't seem to know where he was. There were no intact ambulances in the area, and he wandered toward a car that was on fire. "I better help him," my cop said. He took the man's arm and led him down the street. I asked him where he had come from, but he didn't seem to know. "I have MS," he said. We led him toward the perimeter, where other officers then carried him away.

When we walked back toward the rubble, I noticed something on the sidewalk. It had been cordoned off by yellow tape, as if part of a crime scene, but the tape had broken, which is why I hadn't noticed it before. Inside the area was a thick, metallic object about the size of a desk. "It's the fuckin' engine from one of the planes," a police officer told us. The cop and I stared at it for a while. "It must have cut through there," he said, pointing at the sky, "and landed all the way over here."

Not far behind it was a building with the door blown out, and we went inside for shelter. It was a real estate agency for luxury suites. There was an art deco painting on the wall and travel magazines strewn in the lobby. A camera was sitting on the front desk, along with other valuables, and a piece of half-eaten fudge. A message taped to the wall said MAKE SOFIA'S JOB EASIER.

The phones were working, and the cop and I both tried to call our families. I could hear him on the phone talking to his dad and then to his girlfriend. Afterward he asked me if my wife was OK, and when I told him she was, he seemed genuinely pleased. Another fireman came in and tried to call home as well, when suddenly someone yelled, "Building coming down, clear out," and there was a rush of people outside, firemen and police running past, and the three of us tried to get out. I slipped and fell on the wet floor, then got back up and ran after the cop. There was the sound of an explosion behind us, but the building didn't come down.

Neither of us had much interest in watching the fire burn any longer, and there didn't seem to be anybody to help. So we started to walk uptown, our clothes and hair by now covered in soot. All around us, on the ground or fluttering in the air, were thousands of pieces of paper. They had been blown out of the World Trade Center and were still swirling. I began to catch them in my hands, occasionally bending to pick some up. One said, "World Trade Center Master Options List Report: OPPENHEIMERFUNDS Inc. ... Building 2WTC ... Floor 30." Another paper, typed partly in Chinese, said "American TCC International Group, Inc., One World Trade Center, Suite 4763."

There were e-mails ("thanks for your voice message today") and desk calendars and Post-it notes. I tried to stuff them in my pockets, but I couldn't get them all. The cop saw me and began to catch them too. By the time we got to the car we had such a large mound I had to put some in the back. I wasn't sure what to do with them, but when I got home I sat down and began to read. Most were too charred, but I could make out small clues, about some man named Andrew in suite 101 who received a FedEx package from Stamford on August 6 and another man, named Philip, who worked at Kidder Peabody and sent a package, also on August 6, to General Electric for $8.83. There was part of a novel with the initials "S.P." written on the inside flap; the reader had underlined a passage that said: "There was one thing she was sure of. She was going to become an editor." There was a man named David who wrote long e-mails with phrases like "segment specific retention/winback" and "deliverables were reprioritized," and a woman who had sent an e-mail that said only, "I'll see you at two. Love S." After reading through them, I put them in a neat pile and stored them in a box in the back of a closet. Then I went back upstairs to join the other tenants who had gathered on the roof to watch the empty sky. ■

Manhattan Dispatch

Homecoming

By YOSSI KLEIN HALEVI

AT 9 A.M. ON September 11, I was sitting in a midtown Manhattan restaurant, reading an Israeli newspaper and feeling very far from home. Almost the entire news section focused on the suicide bombing at the train station in the northern town of Nahariya two days before, claiming three lives and wounding nearly 100. My 16-year-old daughter, who'd spent the weekend with a friend near the Lebanon border, had been at the Nahariya station and had boarded a train for Tel Aviv just before the suicide bombing; her friend's father, who'd dropped her off at the station, was lightly wounded. And so I was desperate for real news, the names and faces of the dead and the details that get misplaced in the broad strokes of American reporting from abroad. I'd left my native New York for Israel 19 years ago, in part because I wanted to know Israel not just from the headlines but from the back pages.

The unbearable intimacy of Israel intruded: One of the Nahariya dead, I read, was a 19-year-old soldier who'd

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Solving Shortages through Teacher Cooperatives

'aul T. Hill is a research 'ofessor at the Center on Reinventing Public :ducation, University of ashington; distinguished visiting fellow, Hoover nstitution; and member, oover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education.

Although evidence is mixed about whether there is a national shortage of teachers, big-city schools definitely have trouble finding capable people. There are also general shortages in science, mathematics, and special education.

Civil service and collective bargaining conventions prevent school systems from getting the teachers they need in three ways: by forbidding extra pay for people with rare skills; by tying pay increments to seniority rather than performance; and by emphasizing training in pedagogy over knowledge of content, even in math and science.

These problems all stem from politics and collective bargaining. One possible solution is to create a new status for teachers with rare skills. Science, mathematics, special education, and other **teachers could be employed by independent organizations, which would be vendors to the school district and provide instruction on a contract basis.** Such organizations—let's call them teacher cooperatives—could employ and provide salaries and benefits for teachers for whom the school district would pay on a contractual basis. They could pay as much as districts now pay for teachers—more than $60,000 a year, combining salaries, benefits, and expenditures for in-service training and substitutes. The cooperatives would then be responsible for recruitment, training, and compensation.

As contract employees, teachers would not be covered by the same rules on pay and certification that now constrain school districts. Younger teachers, who would receive relatively low pay as district employees, might prefer to work through cooperatives.

Teachers employed by a cooperative could be assigned to work in more than one school. Thus, an advanced physics teacher might be able to work in two or three high schools rather than just one. Some individuals might keep jobs in industry or pursue advanced degrees while working part-time as teachers. Community college faculty could also moonlight (or daylight) as schoolteachers. Cooperatives could pay more for teachers with advanced degrees than colleges and universities now pay their adjunct faculty.

Individual teachers' pay and benefits, including contributions to vested retirement accounts, could be based on scarcity of skills and individual performance, rather than on seniority. Thus, highly capable younger people, and individuals who were masters of pedagogy in one discipline, could maximize their own productivity and pay.

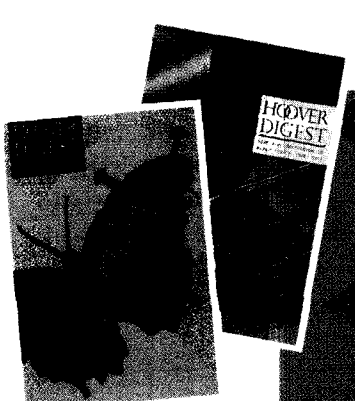
Cooperatives—with strong incentives to use teachers' time as efficiently as possible—would assign teachers only to those courses that they taught especially well. Cooperatives would also promote experimentation with effective ways to use capital, especially computer-based instruction and televised presentations by master teachers. The cooperatives might, in fact, be the mechanism whereby high-leverage uses of technology are finally brought into the public schools.

Cooperatives might also provide school leaders. As with teachers, school leaders would be contract employees and thus would not have to meet all the arcane requirements that apply to district-employed school principals. School districts facing shortages of principals would then be able to tap a fresh supply of people experienced in managing small organizations.

Cooperatives would eventually be self-supporting. Philanthropic funding and initiative, however, are needed to get them started.

— Paul T. Hill

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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graduated from the elementary school my children had attended. I tried to conceal my weeping from the oblivious diners. At that moment, my alienation from America felt complete. Since arriving here two weeks earlier for a book tour, I'd been trying to explain to people what it now meant to be an Israeli—the loss of solidity and of faith in the future, the transformation of the little details of daily life into potentially momentous decisions, like whether to allow your child to go to Nahariya. And the growing realization of how helpless we were: The week before, two car bombs had exploded in my Jerusalem neighborhood, French Hill; though both bombs had been set prematurely and no one was hurt, we knew the reprieve was temporary. My disorientation in America was embodied by its ambulance sirens: When an Israeli hears a siren, he waits for the second one, and when he hears the third, he turns on the television. In America, though, a siren was just—a siren.

And so even well-intentioned Americans, including many Jews I encountered, couldn't quite understand. One Jewish leader in Los Angeles confided that he couldn't recall a time of such crisis in Israel when the American Jewish community was so lethargic. When some acquaintances piously invoked the "cycle of violence," I felt as if I were trapped in a soundproof room with a psychopathic killer, while outsiders peered in and clucked about the lunatics.

AND THEN, SHORTLY after 9 a.m., the maître d' discreetly made the rounds among the Manhattan diners and informed us that a plane had just exploded into the World Trade Center. I waited for someone to turn on a radio, for the restaurant to collectively gasp, but the conversations continued uninterrupted. I realized then how absurd we journalists were to describe Israel as an atomized society. In any Israeli restaurant, normal life would have been suspended instantly. But we are, after all, practiced in the habit of emergency.

Outside, on Fifth Avenue, there were more familiar "Israeli" scenes, obscuring the line between the personal and the political. Strangers gathered around cars whose radios were turned up. "Now it's war," one man with a Spanish accent said to me, repeating a phrase Israelis invoke after every terrorist atrocity. Still, among the thousands of shocked people were some who joked and laughed loudly—even as the World Trade Center burned in full view directly before them. I'd been to many scenes of terrorist attacks in Israel, but that shamelessness was new to me. So was the sight of an enterprising young man hawking transistor radios. While the Israeli instinct is to crowd around a terrorist scene and submerge oneself in a press of bodies, here the impulse was to flee. Many even averted their eyes at the cloud of smoke covering the skyscraper-framed horizon.

I had this terrible, inevitable Israeli thought: Maybe now they'll understand. Maybe now they'll stop moralizing to us about killing terrorists and stop indulging Palestinian rejectionism. Maybe now they'll understand why we can't "share" Jerusalem with Yasir Arafat, and that this isn't just a conflict between mighty Israel and defenseless Palestine but between the Arab world and the lone non-Muslim state in the region. Maybe we won't feel so desperately alone anymore.

Later that day, I was standing on a street corner in Queens, far from the devastation. A plane flew overhead, and people turned anxiously to follow its trajectory. Then an ambulance appeared. All sound seemed subsumed in its siren; everyone paused, as if waiting for the next ambulance. For the first time since I'd left nearly 20 years ago, New York City felt like home. ■

Why aren't airports secure?

Boarding Pass

By GREGG EASTERBROOK

A THOUSAND HORRIBLE questions present themselves, but one is how, as appears to have happened, four teams of terrorists could have hijacked four airliners simultaneously. How did they get their weapons through security? How did they take over aircraft so rapidly that, apparently, no distress calls were sent by pilots?

This article was written within hours of the attack and, therefore, the possible answers it offers are highly speculative. But one leaps immediately to mind: America's airport security is shockingly lax.

Go through a security check at most European airports, and well-trained personnel will inspect your belongings carefully—asking you to open things, to start laptops to show that they really are laptops, and so on. Once, in France, I was asked to turn on my sniper-bullet-shaped pocket flashlight to demonstrate that it really was a flashlight. Within sight of security checkpoints in most European airports are police with assault rifles, wearing armor vests. Pass through security at most American airports, in contrast, and you will be inspected by phlegmatic, minimum wage workers, often recently arrived immigrants with low job motivation and a limited grasp of English. There's a premium on keeping the long lines moving; most inspections are cursory. Rarely are police or armed security guards on hand. If something is amiss, the overworked immigrants at the metal-detectors are supposed to use walkie-talkies to summon aid.

And even these meager security precautions may not apply if you dress like a policeman or as a member of the flight crew. In 1979 columnist Roger Simon of the *Chicago Sun-Times* memorably put on a blue suit and a pair of child's plastic airline captain wings, clipped his driver's license to his suit pocket as if it were an ID badge, and waltzed past security at O'Hare International Airport without being searched. Other reporters have done the same, as have congressional investigators. A thief named Edward Forrest Ingram has in recent years repeatedly walked unchallenged through security at Los Angeles International Airport, dressed in a phony pilot's uniform and flashing fake pilot ID badges.

Airline maintenance workers also receive minimal scru-

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tiny. In December 1987 in California, a recently fired airline employee put a gun into his pocket; walked through security without passing through the metal detector, after flashing his airline ID badge; then boarded a plane and murdered the pilots in flight, causing a crash that killed him and 42 others. After that, the Federal Aviation Administration said airline personnel must go through metal detectors like everyone else, but the rule is not well-enforced. Regulations about direct access to planes from the runway are also lax—in most airports, ground personnel must now swipe a valid ID card over a card reader each time they enter the runway areas but may not be searched for weapons as they enter; once on the tarmac, they are essentially unsupervised. If an airport ground worker were in league with, or recruited by, terrorists, he or she might be able to get them onto the runway with relative ease.

In 1999 inspectors from the Department of Transportation found they could wander unchallenged into many supposedly secure airport areas, drive unchallenged onto the tarmac, or get onto the field by "piggybacking"—waiting for a worker to open a secure door and then slipping along through. DOT agents without any visible ID passed by 229 airport agents during the investigation and were challenged only 53 times. "In a high percentage of tests involving airport access controls, our successful penetration of secure areas almost always resulted in our boarding an aircraft," Alexis Stefani, a DOT official, said at the time.

Or a terrorist might pose as a law enforcement agent. Last year inspectors from the General Accounting Office found they could pass through security at Reagan National Airport and at Orlando International Airport by downloading phony police credentials from the Internet or by using movie-prop police badges. Flashing these, they carried aboard aircraft briefcases that were not x-rayed. Agents assigned to test Reagan National even found that, by using their phony identification, they could obtain official permits to carry firearms through the airport's checkpoints. Perhaps the House Judiciary Committee, which asked for this investigation, was wrong to publicize it, as the details may have given someone an idea. But the study found that gaining access through airport security areas was distressingly easy.

Various studies and commissions, including one chaired by Vice President Al Gore in 1996, have recommended better airport security, especially stricter standards for the contract firms (not police agencies) that staff the minimum-wage x-ray checkpoints. But improvements have been slow at best; an air of complacency has prevailed, especially since, in the last decade, hijackings and airline bombings have seemed to stop.

Much of the debate in the coming days will be about resolve on the international front, as it should. But there is something America must immediately do on the home front: completely revamp its airport security standards. This will mean more hassles and higher, European-style travel costs. But the penny-wise, pound-foolish nature of America's airport security is now clear. Much that has no price was lost this week. Lesser things need be lost too, among them the luxury of running to the airport at the last minute and scooting right on to your cheap flight. ■

Terrorism and freedom, then and now.

Law and Order

By Jeffrey Rosen

Hours after the catastrophe, we were told that America would never be the same. Freedom had allowed terrorists to commit the unthinkable, and therefore freedom would have to be curtailed. The secretary of transportation announced that travelers must prepare for a massive increase in security, including "higher levels of surveillance, more stringent searches." A former director of the FBI invoked Burke on "ordered liberty." Bill Kristol of *The Weekly Standard* called ominously for "a change in certain habits we have here at home."

If losing some of our liberties made us safer, then these arguments would demand serious consideration. But grim experience in Europe and in America suggests that often it doesn't: Galvanizing acts of terrorism tend to provoke sweeping increases in domestic surveillance that change the character of civic life without deterring or preventing future terrorist attacks. By learning from the excessive and ineffective responses of the past, America can focus its energies on retaliating against the guilty rather than transforming life for the innocent.

Although America, until now, has been largely spared, other Western democracies have long struggled with how to respond to threats from suicidal terrorists in urban centers. And the responses have not been encouraging. In Britain, for example, after a series of IRA bombings in the 1990s, Tory and Labour governments massively increased domestic surveillance, including the proliferation of cameras in public places. Although the City of London created a "ring of steel" designed to catch terrorists by photographing every driver who enters and leaves the city, the spy cameras have failed to catch a single terrorist. Instead, they are used primarily to catch traffic offenders and low-level criminals.

America's last national alarm about terrorism at home took place during the Red Scare of the 1920s. After an Italian anarchist blew himself up outside the house of Woodrow Wilson's attorney general, A. Mitchell Palmer, and other politicians received bombs in the mail, Palmer convinced himself that Bolshevik agents were conspiring to overthrow the U.S. government. Aided by his special assistant, J. Edgar Hoover, Palmer used the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918 to clamp down on suspected domestic radicals. In 1919 and 1920, the Palmer raids led to the arrest of thousands of alleged Communists, many of whom were held without trial before being released or deported. None was conclusively proved to be a terrorist. During the 1920s this magazine was one of the most tenacious voices against the excesses of the Red Scare. In editorials like "Is Palmer Guilty of High Crimes?" and "The Red

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Hysteria," the editors warned that "the new inquisitors" were committing unlawful searches, seizures, and mass arrests without warrants, and were seeking to prosecute unpopular opinions rather than protecting America against force and violence. Although the Supreme Court upheld most of the convictions under the Espionage Act and the Sedition Act, some of the later decisions drew spirited dissents from Justices Holmes and Brandeis that became the foundation of our modern tradition of free speech. In the end, after the most serious threat to domestic liberties since the Alien and Sedition Acts, Americans lost patience with Palmer, who was accused of fanning the Red Scare in a failed attempt to win the Democratic nomination for president in 1920.

It is too soon after the infamy of September 11 to think about anything except identifying the terrorists and bringing them to justice. And it is also too soon to say whether the Congress and the president will respond to the calamity as our European allies have done: with popular but ineffective increases in domestic surveillance that make the innocent pay for the crimes of the guilty. But our constitutional freedoms may be about to face their most serious test in several generations. We can't protect ourselves from suicide bombers by blindly surrendering our liberty. To do so would only ensure the victory of fanaticism and the destruction of all that makes America uniquely worth defending. ■

Israel, the United States, and evil.

Counting

By MARTIN PERETZ

FOR MANY MONTHS now, since the beginning of the second intifada (and, truth be told, for years before that), I had suspected that Americans simply couldn't grasp Israel's human losses. The numbers weren't big enough to truly register: three one day, thirteen another, maybe one the next. Up and down, ad infinitum, interrupted occasionally by a stretch of quiet (which meant, of course, not that bombs weren't sent—simply that Israel's sappers had defused them).

So I began to make the gruesome calculations in my head. Given that there are roughly six million Israelis and roughly 300 million Americans, the numerical equivalent to the 21 youngsters massacred at the Tel Aviv disco would be 1,050. The 15 innocents blown apart in the Jerusalem pizzeria equaled 750 American dead. Last Sunday, when terrorists with orders from Allah murdered five Israelis in Nahariya and on the Jordan Valley road, it was another 250 imaginary victims in the United States.

Now I no longer have to imagine. If this turns out (as seems likely) to be Islamic terror, it will not have been the first time Americans were targeted: There were the 241 Marines in Beirut who had come to protect Lebanon's Palestinians from the rage of the Maronite Christians. And the 19 soldiers in Saudi Arabia who died securing that country's oil for its indulgent and utterly blithe royal family. And the 17 sailors on board the USS *Cole*, whose deaths seem of little interest to the government of Yemen, which they were defending. Yet those were troops on foreign soil, just as innocent, of course, but at least somewhat cognizant of the risks. But the thousands and thousands of ordinary Americans ripped yesterday from their families and friends, from their hard work and their good works, from their joys and their melancholy—these Americans, whose final agonies were celebrated in the streets of Palestine and elsewhere in the Arab world, a world of captive minds, unworkable economies, and failed societies—weren't on the front lines. They need no equivalents and have none. They enter our history books as the involuntary but decisive instruments of a great and chastening lesson: that there is true evil in the world and that this evil cannot be placated. It must be fought and, sadly, it must be fought continuously and fiercely.

I DO NOT understand why so many people are so surprised by the radical evil emanating from the Muslim world. U.S. security has long known about its terror networks. The media has not altogether ignored them (although it is sometimes squeamish about stories without a simple moral equivalence theme). One person who may bear some responsibility for lulling us into complacency is our former president. He seemed to think he could charm those who lusted for lives (or apologize for those who so lusted). The Clinton White House was from time to time filled with Muslim- and Arab-American leaders very skilled in making light of moral enormity. They rationalized groups like Hamas and Hezbollah; some even refused to condemn Osama bin Laden by name. The Clintonites also denied the FBI the money it needed to shut down U.S.-based groups that raised money for jihad. And when terrorists took out our embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, he retaliated with a one-shot, two-venue mini-bombing that accomplished exactly nothing.

This was a massive intelligence and security failure. Once again our border officials seem to have been lax in scrutinizing people coming into the United States from countries that are far from friendly. Would greater diligence amount to ethnic profiling? Probably so. But there is no natural right to come into the United States. It is a privilege. I have foreign friends who have been denied even tourist visas. And it's crazy that hard-working Haitians are harassed when they come to our shores and are then shipped back, while some quack Muslim cleric like Abdul Rahman, the prophet of the first World Trade Center bombing, is courteously ushered in. I know that many Arabs come here for the same good reasons others come: a free and good life for themselves and their children. Like other visitors and immigrants, we should scrutinize them carefully and then let them in and wish them well. But there are other Arabs and Muslims who want to bring their fanaticism with them, and some of that fanaticism is criminal. And we should make sure it stays in the

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Middle East, unless of course the great Scandinavian moralizers want to take them in. I find it nutty that among the proposals for how to solve the problem of the Palestinian refugees is for the United States to take some of them in. This would be importing certified resenters.

MAYBE OSAMA BIN LADEN will turn out to be the prime organizer of this sneak attack on America. After all, in June he promised he would pull off something like this, soon. And when he denied culpability the day after the disaster, he added that he was happy it happened. Still, I doubt the guilt stops with him. Muslim terrorism is an amorphous and intricate vortex, but an integrated one. It receives help from many places and people—help in arms, training, disguises, passports, money, morale, and the fanatic fervor of the faithful. Many Saudis—maybe even the monarchy itself—finance it, if only to keep it engaged abroad and out of Riyadh. The very secular Syrian and Iraqi tyrannies facilitate the operations of all kinds of religious extremists as long as they make war against the regimes' enemies. It is time to intensify the military pressure on Baghdad before it gains nuclear capacity, and for Damascus to be held responsible for its indispensable patronage of Hezbollah, a certified ally of bin Laden's war on the West. It is no mystery which governments harbor these madmen, and they should now be quaking with fear.

But much of this does appear to be a mystery to Peter Jennings, who warned against stigmatizing Islamic groups and raised the rush to judgment over Oklahoma City. But this is a figment of Jennings's imagination; commentators have, in fact, been quite scrupulous. And what, after all, if Islamic terrorists didn't do it? Haven't they done enough without this spectacular satanic achievement? Jennings's solicitude does not surprise me. I first saw Jennings on ABC when, as a young TV journalist, he reported from the Munich Olympics. And I was filled with disgust that his subsequent career has only deepened. At Munich—I still remember it, 30 years later—Jennings tried to explain away the abductions and massacre of the young Israeli athletes. His theme: The Palestinians were helpless and desperate. Ipso facto, they were driven to murder. That's life.

Wednesday was a day of national mourning in Israel, of mourning for the innocent Americans murdered in ways to which Israelis are long accustomed. This is a fraternity bonded in blood. All over Palestine, however, multitudes assembled and screamed with joy, "God is great!" This ugliness is probably spontaneous, but in its own official newspaper, *Al hayat al Jadida*, the Palestinian Authority declared: "The suicide bombers of today are the noble successors of their noble predecessors ... the Lebanese suicide bombers who taught the US Marines a tough lesson (in Lebanon) ... and then with no preconditions, threw the last of the remaining enemy (Israeli) soldiers out of the (security) zone. These suicide bombers are the salt of the earth, the engines of history ... they are the most honorable among us." Sad to say, we Americans no longer need any instructions in how it feels to be an Israeli. The murderers in the skies have taught us all too well. We are all Israelis now. ■

Make war, not justice.

How to Fight

By ELIOT A. COHEN

WHAT TOOK PLACE on Tuesday was not a crime; it was war. The scale of the attacks, their coordination, and their sinister calculation of timing and place bespeak organizations that have honed their skills over many years. To deal with them and with those who harbor or protect them, the United States must understand that they are not criminals; they are enemies. There should be no talk of "tracking down the perpetrators" or "bringing the guilty to justice." This is not about cops and robbers, nor about international courts. It is, rather, war—hideous, brutal, and merciless war.

What does it mean, under these circumstances, to wage war? It begins with a willingness to attack those responsible with every intention of killing rather than capturing them. Although the United States has from time to time dropped bombs or fired cruise missiles with lethal intent, it has thus far flinched at outright assassination ("extrajudicial killings," as the term of art now has it). There were a number of reasons, some significant, for such a policy. But it must end. The issue is not merely retribution but sound strategy, which is why the Israelis have pursued just such an approach in dealing with their terror problem. Terrorist organizations are small and specialized—professional in a twisted sense of the term. Kill or disable a key member of one, and you can disrupt a complex operation. Moreover, when terrorists fear death themselves, more of their efforts are directed toward survival and less toward the planning and preparation of attacks.

Terror, moreover, requires some kind of cover from states—either outright protection and sponsorship or indifference. In recent years the United States has been reluctant to spotlight nations that sponsor terrorism. And even when it does, as in the cases of Iran or Iraq, its response is generally limited to economic boycotts and the like. To understand that this is war is to understand that such states are nothing less than allies of our enemies, and they too should feel the full weight of American hostility. A variety of measures, from cyberattacks to blockades and even bombing, should make the leaders of such countries understand that the penalties for supporting terrorists have increased by an order of magnitude. Neutrals or even American allies who turn a blind eye to terrorist activity should know that they will also pay a heavy, if nonviolent, price.

Domestically, too, much must change. Expenditures on defense will surely grow by tens of billions of dollars, as they should. Much of that money should go to the kinds of forces

ELIOT A. COHEN is professor of strategic studies at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

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and systems that can acquire information about terrorists and attack them and their sponsors—sophisticated intelligence-gathering, long-range bombers, cruise missiles and the platforms that launch them, Special Operations forces. Defensive measures will be expensive—command bunkers, ubiquitous metal-detectors and x-ray machines, and other protective devices of all kinds. We will pay a price in convenience and even, perhaps, in the full scope of our personal liberties. We will spend more time waiting in line at airports, find access to government offices more difficult, and quite likely submit to more intrusive monitoring by police and counterintelligence than we have known since the early years of the cold war. We may come to understand, at least in our big cities, the experience of Israelis today or of Londoners several years ago, when IRA bombs meant not being able to go into a cinema without having one's belongings carefully searched. Welcome to the world of omnipresent video cameras, retinal scanners, and perhaps even national identity cards.

This is our generation's Pearl Harbor. In all likelihood, the price in human life will prove even greater and the psychological shock greater still—an attack on our capital and on our foremost city. The task of mobilizing American power, in all its manifestations, now falls on the president and on the government. Not least of the many tasks that rest on their shoulders will be to speak clearly and compellingly to us, to our friends, and to our enemies. To Americans, our political leaders must communicate calm purpose and confident resolve as they mobilize our energies and pass the legislation that will be necessary to take the country to war. To our friends, they must make clear our determination to use whatever means are necessary—including, inevitably, those that are inconvenient or ugly. And to our enemies, they must spell out the consequences they will face. This may mean speaking blunt truths about, for example, the nature of radical Islam, uttering real and precise threats about what we will do to countries that stand in the way of our efforts to crush our enemies, and explaining, after the inevitable collateral damage occurs and we accidentally kill some innocent civilians, that this is an inevitable consequence of war.

If this all sounds grim, it is because this is what war is. But, as we recover from the initial shock and grieving, as we bury our dead and tend to our wounded, busy teams of experts will mine the databases of the airlines and signal-intelligence agencies, and sift through the evidence that undoubtedly exists in the wreckage of the twin towers of the World Trade Center and the smoking hulk of the Pentagon. They will figure out who did this. And when the United States mobilizes, as Tojo and Hitler found out, the results are overwhelming. Sixty years ago, almost to the day, Winston Churchill pondered the news of Pearl Harbor:

> Silly people—and there were many, not only in enemy countries—might discount the force of the United States. Some said they were soft, others that they would never be united. They would fool around at a distance. They would never come to grips. They would never stand blood-letting. Their democracy and system of recurrent elections would paralyze their war effort. They would be just a vague blur on the horizon to friend or foe. Now we should see the weakness of this numerous but remote, wealthy and talkative people. But I had studied the American Civil War, fought out to the last desperate inch. American blood flowed in my veins. I thought of a remark which Edward Grey had made to me more than thirty years before—that the United States is like "a gigantic boiler. Once the fire is lighted under it there is no limit to the power it can generate."

The fire has been lit. ■

The Iraq connection.

Blood Baath

By R. James Woolsey

In the immediate aftermath of Tuesday's attacks, attention has focused on terrorist chieftain Osama bin Laden. And he may well be responsible. But intelligence and law enforcement officials investigating the case would do well to at least consider another possibility: that the attacks—whether perpetrated by bin Laden and his associates or by others—were sponsored, supported, and perhaps even ordered by Saddam Hussein.

To this end, investigators should revisit the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center. A few years ago, the facts in that case seemed straightforward: The mastermind behind the bombing, who went by the alias Ramzi Yousef, was in fact a 27-year-old Pakistani named Abdul Basit. But late last year, AEI Press published *Study of Revenge: Saddam Hussein's Unfinished War Against America*, a careful book about the bombing by AEI scholar Laurie Mylroie. The book's startling thesis is that the original theory of the attack, advanced by James Fox (the FBI's chief investigator into the 1993 bombing until his replacement in 1994) was correct: that Yousef was not Abdul Basit but rather an Iraqi agent who had assumed the latter's identity when police files in Kuwait (where the real Abdul Basit lived in 1990) were doctored by Iraqi intelligence during the occupation of Kuwait. If Mylroie and Fox (who died in 1997) are right, then it was Iraq that went after the World Trade Center last time. Which makes it much more plausible that Iraq has done so again.

According to the theory of the 1993 bombing embraced by federal prosecutors and the Clinton administration, Yousef/Abdul Basit was just another Middle Eastern student who became radicalized in his early twenties. But it is worth noting that the only two publicly reported items suggesting that Yousef and Abdul Basit are the same man could very easily have been products of Iraqi tampering with Kuwaiti police files: a few photocopied pages from earlier Abdul Basit passports that had clearly been tampered with, provided by Yousef in New York in 1992 to get a Pakistani passport in Abdul Basit's name, and fingerprints matching Yousef's

R. James Woolsey is a partner at Shea & Gardner in Washington, D.C. He served as director of central intelligence from February 1993 to January 1995.

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found in Abdul Basit's police file in Kuwait. It is also worth noting that Abdul Basit and his family, who lived in Kuwait, disappeared during the Iraqi occupation, and the family has never reappeared. Was this a random tragedy of war or part of an effort to set up a false identity for Yousef?

Moreover, the Fox/Mylroie theory—that Yousef, via Iraqi intelligence, stole Abdul Basit's identity—would explain a number of troubling differences between Abdul Basit in the summer of 1989 (when he left the United Kingdom after three years of study) and Yousef in September 1992 (when he arrived in New York). If the two are indeed the same man, then, over the course of three years, he would have: (*a*) grown four inches (from five foot eight inches to six feet) in his twenties; (*b*) put on between 35 and 40 pounds; (*c*) developed a deformed eye; (*d*) developed smaller ears and a smaller mouth; (*e*) gone from being an innovative computer programmer to being computer-challenged; (*f*) aged substantially more than three years in appearance; and (*g*) changed from being a quiet, smiling young man respectful to women to a rather different one (a sound file in Yousef's computer, for example, includes his voice saying "Fuck, fuck, fuck" and "Shut up, you bitch").

What incentive would the U.S. government have had to overlook these changes, stipulate that Abdul Basit and Yousef were the same person, and turn away from any suggestion that Saddam was behind the first WTC attack? One can only speculate. But by arguing that the 1993 WTC bombing and a separate, FBI-thwarted plot to bomb New York tunnels and buildings were connected as parts of a common conspiracy, prosecutors made convicting the participants, under the very broad seditious conspiracy law, far simpler. As for the Clinton administration itself, there would be less need to confront Saddam, and perhaps less need to make hard choices, if it didn't finger him as being behind the WTC bombing.

And indeed, ever since Fox's ouster, federal prosecutors and the White House have hewed to the line that most terrorist attacks on the United States are either the products of "loose networks" of folks who just somehow come together or are masterminded by the mysterious and unaccountable bin Laden. Explicit state sponsorship, especially by Iraq, has not been on the agenda. The Clinton administration, meanwhile, treated Saddam—in former National Security Adviser Sandy Berger's famous metaphor—like the mole in an international version of the "Whack-a-Mole" carnival game: If you bopped him on the head, he'd stay in his hole for a while. But what has he been doing while he's down there? If Fox and Mylroie are right, quite possibly planning, financing, and backing terrorist operations against the United States.

As of yet, there is no evidence of explicit state sponsorship of the September 11 attacks. But absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Does it not seem curious that bin Laden issues fatwas, pushes videotapes, quotes poems, and orders his followers to talk loudly and often about his role in attacks on us? Does someone want our focus to be solely on bin Laden's hard-to-reach self, and not on a senior partner?

If we hope to answer that question, the 1993 WTC bombing is a good place to start looking. No one other than the prosecutors, the Clinton Justice Department, and the FBI had access to the materials surrounding that case until they were presented in court, because they were virtually all obtained by a federal grand jury and hence kept not only from the public but from the rest of the government under the extreme secrecy requirements of Rule 6(e) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.

Now a new administration, a new attorney general, and a new FBI director should investigate the materials that Abdul Basit handled while in the United Kingdom in 1988 and 1989, which were taken into custody by Scotland Yard. If those materials have Yousef's fingerprints on them, then the Fox/Mylroie theory is likely wrong. But if they don't, then Yousef was probably a creature of Iraqi intelligence. Which means that Saddam still considered himself at war with the United States in 1993. And, tragically, he may still today. ■

Bin Laden's warning.

Smoke Signals

By PETER BERGEN

HIDING OUT SOMEWHERE in Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden must be a happy man. U.S. officials have identified him as the principal suspect in the disasters visited upon the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. And there are several reasons why. First, the operation required recruits sufficiently well-motivated that they were prepared to commit suicide. Bin Laden's group, Al Qaeda ("the base"), employed suicide bombers in the 1998 attacks against two U.S. embassies in Africa and in the bombing of the USS *Cole* in Yemen eleven months ago. Tuesday's attacks also required pilots capable of flying jets into their targets. And Al Qaeda has actively recruited pilots capable of flying such planes; in 1993 the group even purchased a jet in Arizona, which was flown to bin Laden's base, then located in Sudan by a pilot the group had hired. Al Qaeda also has a long history of attacking U.S. government buildings and military targets. And bin Laden himself recently indicated that he was planning to attack more American targets.

If bin Laden is indeed behind the worst act of terrorism in American history, it would be the culmination of a crescendo of anti-American attacks undertaken by his network in the past decade, beginning with the 1992 bombing of a hotel in Aden, Yemen, that housed U.S. servicemen. That attack killed two Australian tourists, but no Americans. Within a year, however, bin Laden's men were allegedly in Somalia, training Somalis to bring down U.S. helicopters with rocket-propelled grenades, the method used against American Blackhawk helicopters in October 1993 during an intense two-day firefight in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, in which 18 American soldiers were killed. In 1995 four men who later

PETER BERGEN is writing a book, *Holy War, Inc.*, about Osama bin Laden.

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confessed to being influenced by bin Laden, and to being trained in explosives in Afghanistan, bombed a military facility in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, killing five American soldiers. Three years later came the bombings of the two American embassies in Africa, attacks that occurred within nine minutes of each other and killed more than 200 people. For New Year's 2000, Al Qaeda plotted a terrorism spectacular spanning the globe, planning to bomb Los Angeles International Airport, sink a U.S. warship refueling in the Middle East, and bomb tourist sites in Jordan. Those attacks, however, were foiled either by good police work or by the incompetence of the plotters. Then, last October, bin Laden's followers bombed the USS *Cole*, one of the most advanced destroyers in the U.S. Navy, as it was refueling in Aden, an attack that blew a hole the size of a house in the reinforced hull of the warship and killed 17 American sailors.

In the past months there have been strong indications that bin Laden's followers were planning renewed anti-American attacks. In June the U.S. Embassy in Yemen was temporarily closed, and FBI agents investigating the *Cole* attack were pulled out of the country as a result of threats from bin Laden's followers. That same month, two men picked up in New Delhi said they had been planning to blow up the visa section of the U.S. Embassy there and that they were acting on the orders of the bin Laden lieutenant who orchestrated the *Cole* attack. Then, in July, the State Department warned of "strong indications that individuals may be planning imminent terrorist actions against U.S. interests in the Arabian Peninsula."

Also this summer, a skillfully edited two-hour recruitment tape made by Al Qaeda began circulating in the Middle East and appeared on the Internet. The videotape is not only a useful distillation of bin Laden's views but also an indication that Al Qaeda was planing additional anti-American operations. This videotape is part of Al Qaeda's modus operandi, which is to subtly indicate a plot is in the works some months before it takes place—as happened in May 1998, when bin Laden held a press conference in Afghanistan where he talked of "good news in coming weeks." Nine weeks later the embassies in Africa were bombed. A few weeks before the *Cole* bombing, a videotape appeared in the Middle East that was notable for two things: Bin Laden was wearing the curved *jambiya* dagger, typical of Yemen, which he had never previously worn in any pictures, and his deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, specifically called for attacks on U.S. forces in Yemen.

On the new videotape, bin Laden and his advisers make impassioned speeches about Muslims being attacked in Chechnya, Kashmir, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Indonesia, and Egypt; speeches that are given over graphic footage of Muslims being killed, beaten, and imprisoned. For bin Laden, however, the greatest insult to Muslims is the continued presence of Americans in the holy land of Arabia. Bin Laden says: "These Americans brought women and Jewish women who can go anywhere in our holy land" adding "the Arab rulers worship the White House." The images on the screen show the Saudi royal family meeting American leaders such as Colin Powell.

On the tape, bin Laden says Muslims must seek revenge for these insults: "If you don't fight, you will be punished by God." The solution, he says, is for Muslims to travel to Afghanistan and receive training for holy war. The tape then shows hundreds of bin Laden's masked followers training at his Al Farooq camp in eastern Afghanistan, holding up black flags and chanting in Arabic. Bin Laden's fighters shoot off anti-aircraft guns and rocket-propelled grenades, run through obstacle courses, blow up buildings, and shoot at images of President Clinton. Bin Laden himself fires off some rounds from an automatic rifle. Chillingly, the tape also shows dozens of young boys, most of whom appear to be around eleven years old, dressed in military camouflage uniforms, tackling the same obstacle courses seen earlier on the tape.

On the tape, bin Laden also makes his most explicit references ever to Al Qaeda's role in a series of anti-American attacks, starting with Somalia in 1993: "Our brothers in Somalia told us the Americans were not brave." Then he discusses the 1995 bombing of the U.S. base in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: "We decided to get rid of this tyrant enemy in the holy land. Then some of these youths responded." Next he explains that the 1998 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Kenya was because "[t]he American embassy in Nairobi [was] considered to be the biggest intelligence gathering center in east Africa. With the help of God the hit was very strong against the Americans, so the Americans can taste something of what we Muslims have tasted." Finally, he says of the USS *Cole* bombing in Aden, Yemen: "Your brothers ... in Aden ... hit the *Cole*.... They destroyed this destroyer which, when it moves through the water, makes you frightened. She had the illusion she could destroy anything and [then this] small boat bobbing in the waves collided [with the] destroyer. When the collision happened it was the beginning of the war."

Toward the end of the tape, bin Laden implies more action against the United States: "The victory of Islam is coming. And the victory of Yemen will continue...." Now bin Laden appears to have made good on his threat. ■

What we've done wrong.

The Day Before

By LAWRENCE F. KAPLAN

CREDIT ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS with this: They took to the airwaves in record time to calm the American public. Only the administration officials weren't from the Bush administration. Sandy Berger, William Cohen, Richard Holbrooke, Bill Richardson—the networks paraded the entire Clinton national security team in front of the cameras for wisdom on America's day of grief. And, if the Bush team has any sense, it will do exactly the reverse of what they recommend. That's because the Clinton administration offers a template precisely for how *not* to respond to terror. For that reason alone, the Bush team should cast a glance backward before proceeding any further.

The Clinton administration's response, and nonresponse,

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to a succession of strikes against U.S. targets in the 1990s created a profoundly defective paradigm for combating terror. That paradigm rests on three basic principles. The first is that terrorists are less combatants fighting for a political cause than everyday criminals. In Clinton's telling, they represent the dark underside of globalization, the rats that got aboard the USS *Interdependence* before it could embark for eternal peace and prosperity. The trappings of globalization, President Clinton instructed, "make us more vulnerable to a host of threats—terrorists, drug cartels, international criminals—that have no respect for borders." Out of this conviction that terrorists should be lumped in with "transnational" threats like AIDS and global crime, and out of the belief that globalization amounts to "a great tide, inexorably wearing away the established order," grew another conviction: that, hitherto intractable dilemmas of politics having been largely resolved, these terrorists could only be "madmen," nihilists acting on behalf of no serious political cause and without the sponsorship of any country.

Hence, the personalization of counterterrorism policy, and a shift away from the Reagan-era practice of holding states accountable for the deeds of their agents. This is the second principle of the Clinton administration's anti-terrorism policy. Under its terms, the White House treated terror as a law enforcement problem rather than a political challenge—shifting the burden of response from the Pentagon to the Justice Department and referring to terrorists as if they were juvenile delinquents. "We are not a nation that retaliates just in order to get vengeance," Madeleine Albright insisted after the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Africa, "[nor do we] forget our own legal system while searching for those who harmed us." Her predecessors may have responded to terror with the long reach of American military power, but Albright deemed it a matter for the "long reach of our nation's law enforcement."

Alas, law enforcement's reach isn't always so long. While FBI agents and other government investigators operate freely in the United States, they can't do the same abroad. In fact, foreign law enforcement agencies routinely deny their U.S. counterparts access to terrorist suspects. Resistance in both Saudi Arabia and Yemen, for example, has brought American efforts there to a standstill. As a result, most of the culprits who in 1996 destroyed Khobar Towers, the Air Force barracks in Saudi Arabia, still remain at large, as do all of those who crippled the USS *Cole* in Yemen last year. Terrorist suspects sometimes even benefit from the support of the very countries on whose assistance U.S. investigators depend. As Steven Pomerantz, a former FBI chief of counterterrorism, has put it, "When pursued, the terrorists frequently take shelter [in these states], and it's nearly impossible to get them out"—the most obvious example being the haven Libya provided for years to the Pan Am Flight 103 bombers. And, even when America does bring terrorists to justice, it's hardly clear that judicial punishment fits the crime. After all, if you're the type who plans to blow up the World Trade Center, you're probably not deterred by the wrath of the New York district attorney.

Which brings us to the key fallacy of the Clinton policy: that international terrorism is a criminal justice issue at all. It's not. It's an act of war. What the United States ran up against this week wasn't a group of criminals but a creed—an animus toward the United States based on specific political grievances, most of them having to do with America's support of Israel and our military presence in the region. Moreover, launching an international terrorist operation on the scale of the Khobar Towers attack or the World Trade Center horror is, according to terrorism experts, nearly impossible without the connivance or aid, if not the explicit instruction, of a state. "It's implausible that an organization could conduct a sophisticated operation—replete with phony passports, sophisticated explosives, and flying lessons—without at least tacit state support," explains military strategist Andrew Bacevich. Afghanistan's Taliban regime may not have ordered the killings at the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. But the Taliban provide a haven and shelter to the likely culprit, Osama bin Laden, and refuse all requests to expel him. Those facts alone make Afghanistan culpable.

A serious counterterrorism policy would have raised the cost of harboring bin Laden beyond what Afghanistan could bear. The Clinton team had no such policy. True, it directed a fusillade of cruise missiles at a bin Laden camp after the attack on our embassies in Africa. But the whole business of such attacks—which offer action in lieu of strategy, and tactical scoring in place of any intent to destroy—reflects the fiction that America's struggle with terror is distinct from war. Hence, the third Clinton principle, which inclines the United States to expend its military power in increments. The idea is to hit things without jeopardizing people, to skirt moral ambiguities, to design strikes, as Clinton put it after the missile strike against Iraq in 1996, "to have very limited damage to human beings." Although advertised as proof of heightened moral awareness, these pinprick attacks have merely allowed terrorists to conclude that they enjoy more room to maneuver than American rhetoric would suggest—as, indeed, bin Laden clearly does.

What would a response that avoids these pitfalls look like? The United States need not strike out blindly or precipitously. Sometimes revenge is a dish better served cold. But the organization that lies behind this week's destruction should, in all but its initials, cease to exist. The Joint Chiefs of Staff will undoubtedly rule out the deployment of ground troops or even Special Operations forces. According to senior officers at the Pentagon, they won't be so quick to rule out a sustained air campaign. That, of course, would mean putting pilots in harm's way, for such a campaign would require more strikes than there are cruise missiles in the U.S. arsenal. Another plinking, after all, would only dramatize America's weakness.

Fortunately, President Bush seems to recognize the inadequacy of his predecessor's response to terror. Following the attack, Bush said, "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbored them." He continued, declaring his resolve to avenge this "act of war." If bin Laden masterminded this week's evil, that war ought to be taken to bin Laden's hosts. One of them, a Taliban official, told Americans this week that the organization "feels your pain." Let's make extra sure. ■

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Unflinching

COMPARISONS AND pigeonholes are first aids for critics. Examples: "Mr. A's film treats the same theme as Mr. B's, but it doesn't [or does] surpass it." And: "Mr. A's film is one more of the line that began with Mr. B's twenty years ago." What convenient compass points such remarks provide for placing a new work, what apertures for evaluation.

But there are none such for **Aberdeen** (First Run). Even though comparisons and genres have been cited in some comments, they don't really register. I cannot think of another film that treats so heatedly the range of emotional possibilities between a young woman and her father. Desperately, I could reach for *A Bill of Divorcement* (1932), in which Katharine Hepburn made her screen debut as John Barrymore's daughter; but the father-daughter sentiments in that film, comfortably ensconced in social acceptances, have no relation to the fierce ripping of such sentiments here. Of course *Aberdeen* does not—could not—plumb all aspects of father-daughter possibilities, but what it does treat, it puts through several baths of acid.

The director was Hans Petter Moland, born in Norway and educated in America, who co-wrote the screenplay with Kristin Amundsen. The young woman is named Kaisa; living in London, she is prospering in her job and enjoying her life. (Our first glimpse of her is while she is having sex. It's very much to the point of her character that we never see the man or learn who he is.) She gets a phone call from her mother, Helen, who lives in Aberdeen. Helen asks Kaisa to go to Norway and bring her father—Tomas, a Norwegian—to Aberdeen. Helen and Tomas were never married, but she now hopes for Tomas's rehabilitation, in Aberdeen, from the alcoholism that saddles him. The catalyst for both mother and daughter is Helen's disclosure that she has cancer in an advanced stage. Kaisa agrees to make the trip.

Before the credits, we have seen Kaisa, as a child of about ten, running to greet her father in a rush of feeling. But she hasn't seen him much since those days. She finds him in Norway, unemployed (he has worked on oil rigs), truculent, sodden, but somehow strong, with the special pathos and irritation of an intelligent man who is a hopeless drunk. She persuades him to come along with her. From her present point of view, he is a stranger, which puts her in a double position: she must deal with a man whom she doesn't know except that she remembers him as her father. Tomas is in an equivalent position, except that his memories of the past are naturally more detailed.

The bulk of the story is their journey from Norway to Aberdeen. (The film, I should note, is in English.) This journey is not placid. Tomas, slyly and otherwise, finds ways to keep drinking. Kaisa soon reveals, when she sniffs to keep her vigor up, a considerable coke habit. The first big hassle in the trip occurs at the Norwegian airport where they are to board a plane for Aberdeen. Tomas is so soused that the receptionist will not let him board. Kaisa explodes with anger, arguing—in vain—her mother's illness. The loud dispute results in their being barred permanently from flying on that airline. The airport fracas is, perversely, a sort of bonding between father and daughter. In the car that Kaisa has rented, she and Tomas drive to a port and board a ship for England. Misadventures persist, on board and after. Anger and remorse, drunkenness and disgust, billow up and subside. Working through the story, quite unstated, is a serpentine sense that Tomas is ashamed to face Helen, and that Kaisa wants to force him to this meeting.

On an English road, headed for Scotland, their car blows a tire, and a truck driver named Clive stops to help and enters the story. In one town some well-dressed thugs attack the (by now) three of them and rob them. In Edinburgh, Kaisa sells one of her packets of coke to finance the rest of the trip. At one point Tomas feels so harassed by her that he tells her he may not even really be her father. (It turns out that years earlier Helen may have in anger said such a thing—untrue.) But the false revelation allows the coked-up and frazzled Kaisa to make a teasing attempt to seduce Tomas in the back of the car as Clive drives. Thus the film uncovers briefly a dark father-daughter secret, a tease about them that has been lurking in the back of our brains.

The deliberate discomfort of that scene, along with the proliferating tantrums and pukings and sleazes and police interventions, makes this journey a scathing pilgrimage for both father and daughter. But they reach Aberdeen. The very last sequence may seem a bit mushy—I note only that it involves a red clown nose that Tomas had given Kaisa as a child, a souvenir that she has kept on her key ring—but it is a move toward the rehabilitation for which Helen had first dispatched Kaisa, and it helps the film to fulfill its title. Aberdeen is more than the city to which the journey moves: it is the site for father and daughter of a cleansing through pain.

At any rate this is the function that the ending intends. For myself, this ending is only a completion for formality's sake, like a brief coda in music. The real being of the film is the journey, the anatomy of tensions between a father and his daughter, each with privacies of escape and fulfillment, each with self-dissatisfactions, both abutted by circumstance and imprisoned by biology. The journey *is* the film. Neither Kaisa nor Tomas "learns" much from the journey: they harrow their way through it as an episode in their lives. They both know what they have been through but are not transformed except by the increment of experience. The last, soft scene in *Aberdeen* is less a bouquet for the movie world than a brief respite for Tomas and Kaisa. Candidly—courageously, even—this film is an abrasion of audience expectation. It dares to be itself, like it or not.

The four leading actors are splendid. Charlotte Rampling, recently so fine in the French film *Under the Sand*, plays Helen. We never see her out of her hospital bed, and yet Rampling radiates quiet beauty. (I confess that I don't understand why she doesn't have the Scottish accent that Kaisa has.) Ian Hart gives Clive presence and strength effortlessly. He doesn't come across as consciously macho, but his alert disposition and his resourcefulness make him the person needed in the role. I haven't previously been an enthusiast for Stellan Skarsgård, but one is forced to judge an actor by the roles he gets. Here he has, in more than sheer prominence, a major role; and as the stormy, befuddled, riven Tomas, Skarsgård kept reminding me—the highest compliment I could pay a Scandinavian actor—of Max von Sydow.

A truth about Skarsgård is also true of Lena Headey, who plays Kaisa. Anyone

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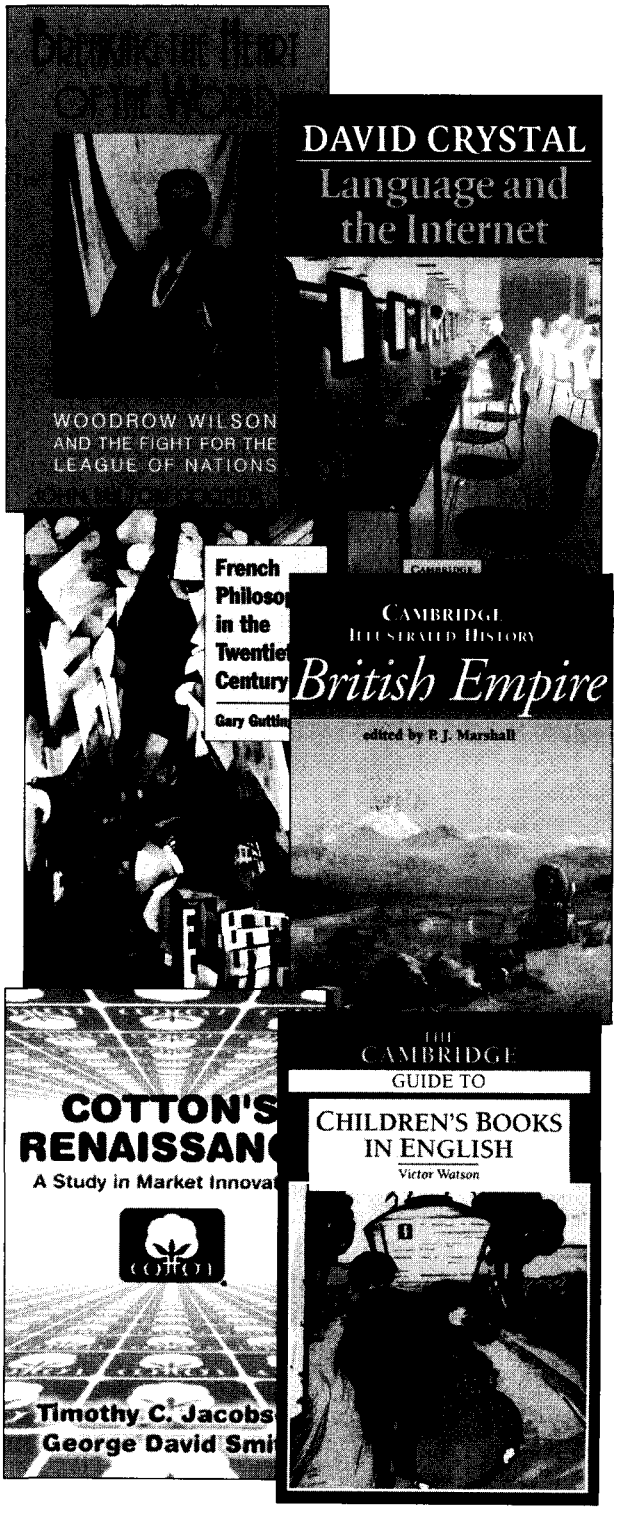

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who sees his performance and hers will be unlikely ever to forget either. Headey, lately seen in the undistinguished *Onegin*, plunges into this role with—oxymoron though it is—controlled abandon. Kaisa is a woman who attracts and discomforts and estranges and even amuses us, and not in any neat progressive or regressive sequence. Headey takes on the repellents in the role as well as the emotional stabs, and she is always authentic, never interested in anything but the verity of the moment. It is a star performance in a way that most starring performances avoid: she doesn't seem to give a damn whether we come away liking her or not, so long as we believe her.

The same is true of *Aberdeen* as a whole. Moland clearly conceived of his film as an unsparing descent into two affined yet warring psyches, and, with an authoritative talent, he has not flinched. ■

Jed Perl on Art

South by Southwest

DONALD JUDD HAD his share of staunch supporters. But you are likely to meet with skeptical responses if you announce that you are captivated by his magnum opus, a composition consisting of one hundred aluminum boxes that is the linchpin of the **Chinati Foundation** in Marfa, Texas. Chinati is where the sculptor made a permanent home for the frequently large-scale work that interested him and some of the contemporary artists whom he admired. It has an eccentric, off-the-beaten-track kind of grandeur that rubs some people the wrong way. The austere forms that Judd (who died in 1994) arranged in and around a former army base in the beautifully hardscrabble landscape of western Texas, three hours southeast of El Paso, can be regarded as a symptom of the man's grumpy megalomania, which was underscored by the stern indictments that he wrote about what he saw as the art world's many sins. And yet I cannot think of a place where megalomania has quite the sparkling artistic logic that it has at Marfa. Arranged in two huge, glass-sided buildings, Judd's aluminum boxes—which repeat the same basic outer dimensions but are each absolutely distinct, with their variously open or closed sides and bisected and divided interiors and floating elements—compose a saga in which formal variations take on a narrative power. You are pulled deep into one man's idea of visual utopia.

Part of the magic of Chinati, as Judd knew, comes straight out of the parched Southwestern landscape, which is probably the only area of the United States where art, architecture, and landscape form an ancient, abiding unity. While Judd was one of those blunt, no-nonsense American aesthetes who would never admit to having a mystical bone in their bodies, he surely saw in the what-you-see-is-what-you-get clarity of the Southwest's light and space and color a place that cut through life's surface nonsense. What drew Judd to Marfa was not entirely different from what had drawn D. H. Lawrence and Marsden Hartley and Georgia O'Keeffe to Taos, which is some four hundred fifty miles north along the Rio Grande. They were looking for a place to cultivate big ideas—about man's relation to art and nature and culture—that they believed the wide world would not understand, and they saw in the Southwest, where echoes of old civilizations sat so easily amid the deserts and the mesas and the mountains, a place to marshal their forces and set to work. The light of the Southwest animates Judd's mill aluminum surfaces, turning them inky dark in the shadows and sometimes almost transparent-feeling in the light, giving these impassive abstract forms a naturalistic dazzle.

The Southwest was becoming a kind of cliché when Judd arrived in the early 1970s, though it was not yet anything like the sand-and-pumpkin-colored parody of Santa Fe style that would take hold a few years later. Mabel Dodge Luhan's house in Taos, where Lawrence and Hartley and O'Keeffe visited, was owned in the 1970s by Dennis Hopper, and he helped turn Taos into an outpost for Tinseltown's "tune in, turn on, drop out" crowd. But whoever comes to the Southwest becomes a part of its story. The landscape and light and art and architecture of the region still have so strong an impact that when Dave Hickey, the quirky essayist whose takin'-it-all-in-stride style has made him an art school hero, was asked to organize **SITE Santa Fe's Fourth International Biennial** this summer, he explained that it "would have to be different from a show I would do elsewhere because Santa Fe has the peculiarity of being an extremely cosmopolitan town devoted to fantasies of the local." Hickey, who is probably more in tune with Hopper's Southwest than with Lawrence's, has come up with an interesting if somewhat opaque formulation. And I am reminded that Judd once wrote an essay called "Local History," a rejection of grand, sweeping art historical visions, which leads me to wonder if the Chinati Foundation might not have the character of an extremely local experience devoted to fantasies of the cosmopolitan.

Hickey, a man of proudly eclectic tastes, is in most respects the complete opposite of Judd, who seemed to believe that at the core of art there was always a static singularity. Yet both Judd's Chinati Foundation and Hickey's Santa Fe Biennial—which he has called "Beau Monde: Toward a Redeemed Cosmopolitanism," and which is up until January 2002—are efforts to find an alternative to the bland, corporatized character of the big city museums and the gargantuan international art shows such as Documenta in Germany and the Venice Biennale (the organizers of which, never inclined to think small, have this summer offered as their unifying theme "Plateau of Humankind"). Judd frequently complained that in museums his work—and that of artists whom he admired such as John Chamberlain, Dan Flavin, and Ilya Kabakov—was so jumbled together with other stuff that it lost its singularity, its weight. Hickey, in the many interviews that he has given around the occasion of "Beau Monde," complains of the impoverishment of the international shows. He is certainly not mistaken when he refers to those shows as almost bionic, and describes the Whitney Biennial in one of his essays as an "uncannily lifelike blockbuster."

IN MARFA AND Santa Fe, Judd and Hickey have offered an alternative to art world practices that they found static and counterintuitive. Judd conceived of Chinati as a place where he could not only permanently present his own work, but also act in a curatorial role, providing spaces for work that he admired. A vast installation by Dan Flavin, first discussed in 1979, opened last fall. There is a beautifully designed building devoted to John Chamberlain's sculpture. Ilya Kabakov has contributed an installation called *School No. 6*. Set up in one of the abandoned barracks at Marfa, Kabakov's work seems a perfectly accurate reconstruction of an abandoned Soviet grammar school, with its dusty books and its faded displays. A visitor

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COURTESY THE CHINATI FOUNDATION

Donald Judd, *Fifteen Untitled Works In Concrete*, 1980–1984, detail

experiences not the illusions of art but the accidents of life, and yet the accidents are so deftly sustained that Kabakov achieves a curious art, closer to mimicry than to mimesis. Meanwhile, at "Beau Monde," Hickey acts not quite as an artist but certainly as an auteur, using clever juxtapositions and a mix of known and lesser-known artists in an elaborately designed space to give everything a personal stamp, so that this becomes the Dave Hickey Show.

Judd and Hickey are too widely known to be regarded as marginal figures, but they are certainly dissatisfied with other people's mainstream ideas. At "Beau Monde," where dissent from the mainstream seems to involve bright colors and uproarious patterning, visitors may be reminded of earlier ballyhooed defections from the supposed severity of standard-issue taste, especially some that occurred in the 1970s under the banners of the Pattern and Decoration movement and Bay Area Funk. There are many people who will question Judd's dissident credentials, remembering that he and many of the artists whom he admired in the 1970s were already going into the history books, where they were described as the gang that had broken with Abstract Expressionist emotionalism. But Judd, who never cared for the Minimalist label, had a more complex and personal idea about what had happened to art in the early 1960s, when he was beginning to exhibit.

Judd saw the principles of wholeness and specificity and repetition that interested him as reflected not only in his own pared-down imagery, but also in the almost baroquely complex canvas reliefs of Lee Bontecou and in the comic figurative paintings of John Wesley, for which a permanent gallery is planned at Chinati. The art that Judd liked can seem quirkier and more eccentric than you might at first expect. He had a sense of humor, which is reflected in the inclusion at Chinati of Wesley's paintings, with their pneumatic showgirls, and in the giant sculpture of a horseshoe by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen. As for Hickey, despite his fondness for funky more-is-more imagery, he also has a taste for pared-down images, including paintings by Ellsworth Kelly and Jo Baer and sculpture by James Lee Byars.

HELL-BENT INDEPENDENCE has been a part of the mythology of the West for so long that by now the very idea can have a waxworks artificiality. Judd and Hickey, in their very different ways, put some sparks under the Marlboro Man idea, and while each of them brings a cosmopolitan person's tough-mindedness to Western myths, they are both to some degree native sons and proud of it. These men are deft, appealing writers, and they weave their early Western adventures into their writing. Judd's criticism, which is mostly out of print, has a bracing clarity, but in his laconic way he is a true romantic. In an essay about how he came to move to Marfa, Judd recalled that he "lived in Dallas for two years as a child and knew, as everyone did, that the West, which is the Southwest there, began beyond Fort Worth. The land was pretty empty, defined only by the names in the stories about Texas by J. Frank Dobie, as the names in the Icelandic sagas substitute in that country for the monuments that don't exist." That metaphor is certainly designed to give Texas a wild grandeur. From Hickey we learn that his father was a jazz musician and that the family lived and had some happy, wayward times in Texas and California. Hickey remembers dressing like his dad, in "jazz-dude apparel: penny loafers, khakis, and Hawaiian shirts with the tails out," and going off to a jam session in a suburban house, where blacks and whites mixed and where the piano player, a woman, was a German-Jewish refugee.

Both Hickey, who is sixty-two, and Judd, who was sixty-five when he died, came of age in the late 1950s and seem to be animated by the same take-it-as-it-comes spirit as Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* and Robert Frank's photographs in *The Americans* (which included an introduction by Kerouac). "My dad was cool and poetic," Hickey writes. "And my mom was ... serious, high-strung, and fiercely ironic, like Joan Crawford, always bustling around: painting bad paintings in the back bedroom and reading books while she cooked dinner (setting the occasional paperback aflame)." In Hickey's account, this is all part of the life that is lived outside the big northern cities, and it turns out to have a strange improvisational richness, as Hickey spent his "childhood in the cacophonous, postwar milieu that gave birth to bebop." Judd has a quieter way of recalling the thrill of being on the road. He remembers, in his essay on Marfa, a bus trip with three army buddies in 1946, from Fort McClellan, Alabama to Los Angeles, and how they passed pretty

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near Marfa, and how he wrote to his mother from Van Horn, Texas of the "NICE TOWN BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY MOUNTAINS." Later, in 1963, when he was already showing in New York, Judd took a Greyhound bus to Tucson, and he recalled that the "first night at three o'clock somewhere in Pennsylvania a man came aboard and collected my pillow and charged me fifty cents for another."

JUDD AND HICKEY do not believe that big cities are the only places for artistic spirits. These men are dudes, in the dictionary sense of sophisticated people with a complex relationship to rural style. They are part of the big world even as they refuse to play by its rules. They like to tell stories about their not-New York experiences, about their experiences in the Southwest and the West, which sometimes seem to form a not-New York unity. By the early 1970s Judd was spending time in Mexico, but "the new and old pottery I had bought in the Southwest was spalling in the humidity of New York, and the cacti I had collected were dying." So he began to search for a permanent spot in the Southwest. New Mexico was too cold and too high for him, and he may have found Santa Fe and Taos too full of the ghosts of Southwestern dreamers past. (Real estate was probably also too expensive.) What he eventually found in west Texas was "fine, mostly high rangeland dropping to desert along the river, with mountains over the edge in every direction. There were few people and the land was undamaged."

Hickey, who is a professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, describes his adopted hometown as "that ardent explosion of lights in the heart of the pitch-black desert," and "the only indigenous visual culture on the North American continent, a town bereft of dead white walls, gray wool carpets, ficus plants, and Barcelona chairs—where there is everything to see and not a single pretentious object demanding to be scrutinized." Judd's West is a long way from Vegas, but he admires Mies's furniture, commenting that it "should not be considered as only a worn status symbol." Judd saw the stripped-down quality of the Southwestern landscape as connected with the stripped-down quality of his work. "I loved the land around Tucson," he wrote, "chiefly because you could see it. In regard to vegetation, temperate means immoderate." Judd found something interestingly intemperate—and thus paradoxically moderate—in the Southwest. Hickey finds something ardent and explosive there. In both cases the West has something that is missing in the East, in the places where art is supposed to be happening.

HICKEY HAS A likable way of unfolding little anecdotes and stories; a reader is not surprised to learn that he has published fiction as well as criticism. But one of the problems with his criticism is that he brings much more energy and focus to those little scenes-from-the-life vignettes than he does to any work of art. True, he has produced essays, often in exhibition catalogs, that zero in on works by specific artists. But the writing for which he is best known consists of the pieces in two collections, *The Invisible Dragon: Four Essays on Beauty* and *Air Guitar: Essays on Art and Democracy*, and in these books works of art are swept into a kind of ever-expanding riff by this man who cherishes the memory of growing up when bebop was king, a riff in which the work of art often seems to be sidelined, if not eclipsed, by Hickey's descriptions of all the interesting thoughts he had while lecturing at this or that university or playing the slot machines in Vegas or watching basketball or *Perry Mason* reruns.

"Beau Monde" is the fullest answer that Hickey has yet given to the question of what he likes in contemporary art, and if the show tells us anything it tells us that Hickey likes art to be gosh darn pretty. For the most part the works are not regarded individually; they are juxtaposed and sometimes even layered to create a fetching ensemble—a kind of eye candy. This is not an especially large exhibition, but it has been cannily plotted, with rooms of highly varied shapes and sizes that hold works large and small, so that a visitor has a pleasurably meandering experience. What with all the brightly colored walls and images that are heavy with patterns and design materials that evoke the decorative arts styles of the 1950s and 1960s, the experience can be rather like turning the pages of some edgy home-style magazine such as *Nest* or *Wallpaper*, where kitschiness is a form of elegance and the editors want to keep you wondering.

There is an Op Art leitmotif to "Beau Monde," which begins with Jennifer Steinkamp's video marquee that sends moiré patterns spinning around above your head. Nearby is a big Bridget Riley painting, which continues the 1960s mod-funk mood. Flowers are very big at "Beau Monde." The Los Angeles design team Graft Design, which helped Hickey to organize the space, has lined the entrance with fake blue and yellow flowers, which may remind some of Koons's topiary *Puppy* guarding the entrance to the Guggenheim in Bilbao. There are have-a-nice-day flower faces all over the idiotically upbeat installation by Takashi Murakami, the artist who has some people convinced that Hello Kitty can have a spiritual dimension. There is flowered wallpaper on Jessica Stockholder's installation and some flowers on the graffiti-style painting by Gajin Fujita. An installation by Marine Hugonnier is—literally—a bouquet. There are flowers stitched into the feathered Mardi Gras costumes of Darryl Montana. And there are even flowers in Jeff Burton's lush photographs of blurry sex scenes; some of the furniture, which is not as blurry as the buff bodies, includes floral-patterned upholstery.

The show has a kind of decorative stream-of-consciousness. Maybe Hickey thinks this is what art is all about. He does give you stuff to look at. The show suggests an individual's visual appetite, which is more than I can say about any Whitney Biennial that I have seen in recent years. Hickey's studied eclecticism—with minimalist works by Jo Baer near some dull but weird symbolist paintings (which also include flowers) by Kermit Oliver—reflects an active mind. But this is the visual equivalent of hip mood music: something to let your thoughts surf over. Stockholder's installations always meander, but here her electrical cords and casually nailed-together wallboard and thrift-shop finds flow straight into Montana's feathered costumes, behind which are some blobby shapes by Jorge Pardo, next to which is a kind of Op Art black-and-white job by Jesús Rafael Soto that reminds me of Agam. For the most part, Hickey does not seem to be asking us to take on the works in "Beau Monde" one by one. They have been collaged and assemblaged to create a charmingly animated atmosphere.

THERE IS ONE remarkable room in "Beau Monde" in which Hickey creates a punchy, careening elegance with work by only two artists, the painter Ellsworth Kelly and the ceramicist Ken Price. Here is Kelly's *Blue Black Red Green*, a composition of four panels in the colors of the title, each four-sided but with the sides unpredictably angled to create a sense of dancing, slouching animation; and there, across the room, on four separate pedestals, are four ceramics by Price, biomorphic forms, one a single, almost cartoonish tongue or phallus shape, others as rumpled as Chinese scholars' rocks. Kelly's singular colors have the exuberance of kindergarten basics: you feel as if you are being presented with life's fundamentals. Price's glazes, in a range of deep, almost metallic hues that include orange, purple, pink, and yellow-green, are complicated with curious flecks and specks, so that the surfaces have the weird fascina-

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tion of the skin of some mythological monster. Facing off across the room, Kelly and Price seem to be saying how simple and how complex an effect of color can be.

Their shapes have an attraction-of-opposites appeal, too. Both artists use asymmetry to suggest underlying forces; each curve or angle in their work suggests the afterimage of a kinetic process. The Price pieces, with their comic undulations, offer an extreme and maybe even parodic view of the biomorphism of a classic modern artist such as Arp, who took a witty delight in the growth and transformation of simple forms. There has never been any question about Kelly's relationship with Arp, whom he met in France after World War II and whose experiments with compositions controlled by chance Kelly echoed in his work. But in recent years Kelly's eye-filling paintings have had a way of becoming a little too calculated in their abbreviated effects. By pairing Kelly with Price, Hickey italicizes the comic strain that is always lurking in Kelly's swank simplicity.

As for Price, I am left feeling that there is a gravitas somewhere at the heart of his giddily ambiguous anthropomorphizations. At "Beau Monde" he becomes a more complex artistic personality than I had imagined him to be. Interestingly, Price and Kelly have both saluted Gaudí, Kelly in a series of photographs of the mosaics of Park Güell, Price in certain ceramic pieces. Gaudí, who embodied the spirit of Barcelona, is a legendary instance of an artist who embraced local values—of craft, of decoration—and turned out to be a central figure in the destiny of modern art far beyond Catalonia, where he lived his whole life. Price, who divides his time between Taos and Venice, California, has for decades been discussed as a not-enough-sung hero of Southwestern art; but in an odd way Kelly, for all the generalizing elegance of his work, is also an artist who has stood against an American version of bland international values. The time that Kelly spent in France after World War II gave him an appreciation for the very specific weight and drama of mid-century Constructivist ideas. To this day, his work has an exactitude of scale and delicacy of spirit that says: Left Bank, circa 1952.

Paris was one of the places where local values became transcendent values, but at "Beau Monde," despite the teasing French title, local often remains local, a series of riffs on the idea of Southwestern or Western style. Darryl Montana's Mardi Gras costumes, constructed and worn for generations by his family, an African American New Orleans dynasty whose work has been featured in museum shows, are a sort of high-kitsch commentary on Southwestern Indian traditions; they have more beads and feathers per square inch than Cher has piled onto many an outfit. Alexis Smith's installation, with its New Mexico sunset and faux Indian rug, not only looks like a J.C. Penney version of the Southwest—that's what it is. The electronic gadgetry in Stockholder's assemblage comes from Los Alamos, which perhaps makes her contribution a kind of antiwar statement with a Southwestern tilt. Hickey also includes some artists whose work does not seem to have a Southwestern orientation but who happen to live in the area, such as Frederick Hammersley, a rather mild abstract artist who was first known as an Abstract Classicist in Los Angeles in the late 1950s and has been in Albuquerque for many years.

COURTESY SITE SANTA FE

"Beau Monde," Santa Fe

The group of movies that are an integral part of "Beau Monde" contains one happy surprise, Sarah Morris's *AM/PM*. Morris, who focuses on the sights of Las Vegas, has an instinct for the beauties of a chaotic urban scene. She brings an original sense of abstract pattern to displays of neon lights in the night city that could easily be clichéd, and she zeroes in on little interactions of people in the street with an eye for witty miniature narratives that brings Rudy Burckhardt to mind. The focus moves to California in Kenneth Anger's three-minute Camp classic, *Kustom Kar Kommandos*, in which a Troy Donahue kinda guy is taking a powdery feather duster to his gleaming vintage car. And the Anger movie is immediately followed by Ed Ruscha's *Miracle*, another spin on L.A. car culture.

To the extent that Dave Hickey himself is the real subject of "Beau Monde," visitors who want to understand exactly what he has in mind may turn to his small book *The Invisible Dragon*, which has become one of the art world's most popular texts. This treatise on what Hickey regards as a revival of interest in beauty has a deftly worked verbal surface that might be viewed as a kind of intellectual analogue to the flashy prettiness of the galleries at "Beau Monde." What I find most striking in Hickey's book is its opening gambit, in which he describes how, while "drifting, daydreaming really" at the end of a panel discussion on "What's Happening Now," he found himself responding to a question from "a lanky graduate student" by announcing that "the issue of the nineties will be *beauty*." Hickey writes that this was "a totally improvisatory goof—an off-the-wall, jump-start, free-association that rose unbidden to my lips from God knows where." But he decides to go with it. *The Invisible Dragon* is a riff, but it is a riff that grows increasingly shrill. And now, a decade later, we have "Beau Monde."

Hickey uses a good deal of academic jargon, but he uses it in an almost playful way, as if it were being spouted with a slightly ironic twist in a late-night bull session after the day's serious work had been done. There is a bravura to his phraseology, as when he speaks of the "prevailing rhetoric of spontaneity" or of the "rituals of 'aesthetic' submission." Hickey is obviously interested in demonstrating his knowledge; he wants us to know that he can speak with ease and authority about the iconographical background of, say, Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary*. He also wants us to know that he has seen it all, which I guess is why he opens a discussion of Mapplethorpe by explaining that he "saw Robert's *X* images

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for the first time scattered across a Pace coffee table at a coke dealer's penthouse on Hudson Street."

A quartet of essays, *The Invisible Dragon* meanders here and there, and perhaps many people who express a fondness for Hickey have never made it to the end, where he finally gets around to blaming our alienation from beauty on an art establishment that he characterizes as a "therapeutic institution" full of people who "validate, essentialize, and detoxify our *images*—to glorify *their* battles ... —and, of course, to neutralize their power." If you are confused about what the "their"s refer to, that is typical of Hickey, who has a real fondness for vague antecedents. Hickey is also a bit vague about what this therapeutic institution consists of, except that it involves museum people, arts education people, and grant-giving bureaucrats. Perhaps he is too canny a self-promoter to draw up an enemies list, which might interfere with his ability to obtain teaching gigs and speaking engagements. But he does like to speak ill of the dead, and he seems to reserve a special hatred for Alfred H. Barr Jr., the founding director of the Museum of Modern Art.

Hickey relates Barr to Goebbels and to "Stalin's cultural commissars." What, pray tell, is the connection? It is that they all "consolidated and activated the powers of patronage to neutralize the rhetorical force of contemporary images—to minimize the slippage, as it were, between how it looks and what it means, because, as long as nothing but 'the beautiful' is rendered 'beautifully,' there is no friction—and things do not change." What exactly this means it is impossible to say, but the reader gets the general point. Barr "proclaimed the absolute subordination of content to form." This is patently false, as I would imagine would be clear to anybody who has read Barr's writings, from his primer for museumgoers, *What is Modern Painting?*, to his beautifully subtle delineation of the social forces out of which art emerges in *Matisse: His Art and His Public*. For decades one of the complaints that American avant-garde artists made against Barr and the Modern was that they supported too much sentimental contemporary American realist painting. And the importance that Barr ascribed to *Guernica*, which for many years could be regarded as the key work at the Modern, had everything to do with the mural's content.

But even if Barr had been the pure formalist that Hickey mistakenly imagines him to have been, how would that control our experience of art, at least in any way analogous to the tyranny of Goebbels? Pairing Barr and Goebbels—and Hickey insists on it—is as cheap a shot as I can imagine. Hickey published *The Invisible Dragon* eight years ago, when there were still fashionable academic circles where liberal taste was regarded as a kind of fascist taste, and maybe he would say something different today. But if Hickey means all of this only in some vague metaphorical way, it is for that very reason all the more symptomatic of his thinking in general. What he offers is not thoughts about art, but rather a chic mental atmosphere in which art experiences and pop infatuations float around with scraps of historical and iconographical information and approving glances at any number of intellectual fads.

Hickey's writing is not about looking at art, it is about living in the vicinity of art. He is one of Warhol's children. All the shiny surfaces at "Beau Monde" recall the tinfoil walls of Warhol's Factory, of which Hickey describes being "a step-child." (Hickey is an aging dude.) Warhol and his gang liked pretty things: the man did have taste. I imagine that Warhol understood Fragonard's giddy fun; he might have imagined his *Marilyns* and *Flowers* as a contemporary equivalent. But he wanted art to be almost exclusively a celebration of a zeitgeisty mood, without any independent weight. The Warholians will never let art be art; it has to be made a part of the huge feel-good art party that is life. Thus Hickey explains at one point that he has never "had any experience of high art that was not somehow confirmed in my experience of ordinary culture—and that did not, to some extent, reform and redeem that."

Hickey writes about the beautiful exhilaration of art, but he does not see the beauty of art as emerging from our experience of life so much as he sees art in a kind of dependent relationship with life. He wonders whether "the art of Pollock or Brakhage [could] exist without the imprimatur of Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker? Could I have understood it without its being informed by the cultural context of American jazz? Without the free-form exuberance of bebop? My answer: No way, José. And, conversely, could bebop exist without Jackson Pollock and Stan Brakhage? You betcha." At the core of Hickey's thinking is an attack on the free-standing value of the work of art. In this sense his writing is consistent with most of the ideas about art that have a wide currency today. To be sure, there were times in the twentieth century when the idea of the autonomy of the

I Remember

for Yehuda Amichai

I remember walking you home so you could walk me home
so I could walk you halfway back, until, finally,
you walked one block to finish a last story like a blessing.

I remember our wandering around the Circus Maximus
of Times Square to Mozart, you proved, beating time
on my back, your hand in the crowd conducting ecstasy.

I remember the warm yogurt of the Dead Sea,
wiggling our toes and balancing the sun on our noses
like comedian seals, God, for once, speechless.

I remember the Jerusalem you showed me like a wound,
every tree, street, and shadowed doorway.
I remember the stars burning in the night like graves.

I remember our driving eight hundred miles
to move my mother into a nursing home, your kissing
her hand like a soldier saluting an act of courage.

I remember our silence at the Western Wall,
our prayers hovering in the air like hummingbirds.
I remember you smiling as if everything had been forgiven.

I remember our singing Vallejo, Tranströmer, Szymborska,
in a classroom, the joy in your hooded eyes,
the cancer scraping your blood like a scythe.

I remember you drifting off in cafés like an astronaut
turning in space, attached only by an umbilicus of faith,
the light in your eyes moving farther and farther away.

Philip Schultz

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work of art was made to seem unnecessarily chilly. The extent to which art absorbs and comments on life was not something about which Clement Greenberg, say, was always as open as he might have been; but when Hickey sets art in a kind of dependent relationship with "ordinary culture" (whatever that is), he robs art of its freedom.

There is a strong polemical undertow to "Beau Monde," and perhaps the success or the failure of the work will strike some as less important than the fact that Hickey has taken a stand. There may be a sense at "Beau Monde," as in Hickey's thinking in general, that local or regional values have a kind of personal vitality that will "redeem" the "cosmopolitanism" of art. Yet what vitality there is in Hickey's show is too often stagy rather than dramatic. The artists are all for beauty and loveliness and poetry and lyricism; but when it comes to shaping a particular kind of beauty they are largely helpless, because they know nothing about giving a powerfully interesting shape to the inherently disinterested formal material out of which all art is constructed. At "Beau Monde," art is impersonated. Art appears in drag. Hickey's show teases with dramatic possibilities, but they generally remain unfulfilled.

Many of the artists in "Beau Monde" would seem to understand that the past is a good place to look when you are stymied in the present. There is a sense at the Santa Fe Biennial that a usable part of the past can be found right in your own backyard, which just might be the Southwest. Ken Price's glazes make use of that regional past, but he is a lot further from the essential attitudes of "Beau Monde" than Alexis Smith, for whom the Southwest is all pose and attitude, a touristy joke in which she reveals her complicity even as she may be trying to suggest her superiority. She is just a coarse ironist.

I WOULD BET that many highly ambitious artists are reluctant to admit to being all that absorbed by the spirit of a place, since they quite naturally want to transcend the place where they happen to be. Clearly "Beau Monde," despite its regional coloration, wants to keep anti-regional options open. Yet all artists who do something worthwhile will ultimately respond to their surroundings, however elusively. And whatever you may think of Southwestern art old and new, this is a part of the world where art has for so long been so much a matter of rhythm and pattern and abstraction that it cannot but touch a chord in modern sensibilities. There is something in the improvisatory rhythms of the Indians' buildings and weavings and pottery, and in the rough-hewn Baroque Hispanic styles of architecture and decorative carving, that seems to grow almost organically out of the deserts and the mesas and the mountains.

I found myself thinking about these questions of place more often at the Chinati Foundation than at "Beau Monde." Donald Judd had a grandly Platonic kind of artistic ambition, which can seem to sit uneasily with the very idea of a spirit of place. And yet there is something in the taciturn surfaces of his work and in the gradual way that his sculpture yields its surprises that is very much of the Southwest. Judd's work owes something to the adobe architecture and the patterns of ceramics and rugs, all of which take simple ideas and complicate them. He was a serious collector of such objects. He understood a good deal about the covert formal drama of Southwestern visual culture.

In one essay, Judd regretted the "lost chance ... to restore the adobe church in Ruidosa, near Sierra Chinati," for which he had thought of asking "Ken Price to make work for the interior." When, at Chinati in 1991, Judd exhibited work by another lover of the Southwest, he chose Josef Albers, who with his wife Anni had traveled extensively in Mexico and Peru, collecting artifacts and photographing the ruins, and who was perhaps, like Judd, too astringent a figure to embrace Taos-style mysticism and mythology. Judd included in that show a number of photographs that Albers took in Mexico and Peru, pictures that focus on ruins, on their general forms and their rich decorative details. Although Judd's catalog essay, a detailed attack on what he perceived as the New York critics' misunderstanding of Albers, does not go very far into Albers's Southwestern connection, it was just like the laconic Judd to present the Albers photographs without too much comment. And what we see in these photographs is Albers responding to the abstractness of ancient American art.

What Judd grasped better than any artist who has settled in the Southwest in the last fifty years is that you personalize influences by expanding the context in which you understand them. I do not doubt Judd's interest in Albers as a painter, but his inclusion of the photographs reminds us of the interest that both Josef Albers and Anni Albers took in Mexican and Peruvian textiles and sculpture and ceramics in the 1940s, and how that was connected through them to Bauhaus ideas about the unity of art and design. In his essay on Albers, Judd remarks that "at the least it cannot be said of the Bauhaus that it was reductionist." This is an important statement, coming as it does from an artist who was part of a generation that tended to dismiss the Bauhaus as rigidly pedagogical. Judd, who designed a good deal of furniture, was obviously interested in the idea of re-imagining all the formal possibilities that existed in the world, from the practical formalism of furniture and architecture and graphic design to the other-than-practical formalism of painting and sculpture. Just such an enterprise animated the Bauhaus.

The Bauhaus masters would surely have agreed with Judd when he insisted that furniture is not sculpture. They would probably have also agreed that there are certain fundamental generative principles—symmetry, rhythm—that can give different forms an underlying unity. Judd must have felt that it was only by designing both sculpture and furniture that he could convincingly clarify the differences. At Marfa, he designed beautiful courtyards using adobe. He was interested in the indigenous furniture of the Southwest, which may have had an impact on his own ultra-simple furniture of the 1970s. The absoluteness of his immense sculpture projects at Marfa—the hundred aluminum boxes and the series of fifteen concrete structures that lies beyond them, visible in the fields—raises questions about the power of abstract form to provoke emotion that have preoccupied architects and builders since ancient times, and certainly in the Southwest.

Judd's work is a daring re-imagining of the idea of structure as distilled feeling that powered the thought of several generations of Europeans, including Mondrian, Rietveld, El Lissitzky, Malevich, Mies, and Aalto. Although they are not open to the public, some of the most fascinating areas at Marfa are Judd's private spaces: the house that he designed out of several old buildings, developing sleeping and eating areas and a wonderful library; the suite of rooms where he worked on architecture designs and kept his collection of furniture by Rietveld and Aalto and others. Judd—an American of left-liberal views who was involved in community activism in New York in the early 1970s but had no illusions about what leftist regimes had generally meant for art—did something surprising with the visionary simplicity of early-twentieth-century Europe.

STANDING IN THE rooms in which Judd worked at Marfa, looking at the shipshape arrangement of his furniture and writing implements and tools, I was reminded of the salutes to early-twentieth-century Dutch modern taste that you find in Guy Davenport's stories. In one story, Davenport describes his protagonist's "books accurately aligned on my new wealth of bookshelves, floor to ceiling, around two walls and part of the

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third. Rietveld table in place. Paintings. My spartan bed with its Shaker quilt." I have no idea what Judd would have thought of Davenport's writing, with its Scandinavian health-magazine homoeroticism, but they do both partake of the utopian spirit of modernism. These two men give us an Americanization—which amounts to a secularization—of the grandiose, social-idealist dimension of European constructivism. Austere structures often have a beautiful Platonic fascination. That such structures, although so alluring, may also ultimately prove unlivable is a great perplexity that circulated around the architecture of Mies and the proposals for interiors and entire cities in Mondrian's essay "Home-Street-City." The work that Judd created at Marfa is a wonderful, disabused, but somehow still optimistic continuation of the achievements of those formidable dreamers.

The scale on which Judd worked at Marfa—with a hundred aluminum boxes, each 41 by 51 by 72 inches, or in the cycle of fifteen concrete structures in the fields—has nothing to do with megalomania. He was simply doing what was necessary to express a certain sense of rhythm and interval and expansiveness. The quality of the detail—the delicacy with which sheets of metal meet or are juxtaposed—is Miesian in the very best sense of the word. But in Judd's work the Platonism of architecture has at long last been released from the dilemma of functionality. What Judd has given us is an abstraction of the idea of utopian architecture.

Much of the Chinati Foundation is dedicated to this abstracted utopianism. Dan Flavin's light sculpture is arranged in six buildings, each a U-shaped former barracks, with colored lights at their far ends, in a series of patterns that unfold as you go from building to building. It is elegant but static; an equation without an imaginative dimension. The miracle of Judd's work is that his variations push a visitor's mind; you are experiencing, in visual terms, a symphonic tone poem. Ultimately the superficial regularity of Judd's hundred aluminum boxes can begin to seem like a kind of Olympian joke, because the closer you look, the less regular they are. The boxes, each with its own unique internal divisions, are not even divided evenly between the two buildings: one grouping is of fifty-two, one of forty-eight. All the subtle asymmetries and variations—which become almost overwhelming as one moves from box to box—give the work its intoxicating charm. The effect is of a quietly exhilarating delirium, with variations and divisions, box to box, echoing in one's memory all at once.

At a symposium on "Art and Architecture" held at Marfa in 1998, the architectural historian James Ackerman pointed out that Bernini was "one of the few pre-modern sculptors whom Judd respected." I think that Judd's aluminum boxes have some of the aura of a Bernini fountain: the quality of being a serious sort of folly. And the relationships between Judd's big works at Marfa and their surroundings are as complex as the relationships between Bernini's fountains and the ancient Roman piazzas in which they are so deftly located, and which Bernini so subtly altered in order to carry these spaces to another level of meaning. Judd's alterations of the buildings of the old Fort Russell at Marfa—moving a doorway, removing a later addition, repairing a floor—are about catching and underscoring the essence of older American building types. And his sculpture, with its complicated simplicities that urge us to poke around, to look and to look some more, are tuned to the kinds of careful exploration of pattern that we bring to an Indian bowl or rug, or to watching the adobe structures of Taos Pueblo emerge out of the surrounding hills.

In a sense Marfa is the "Beau Monde," though Judd would have shaken his head at the French version of this ideal. He would have said it in Spanish, the language of the place, as he was always careful that the Chinati Foundation be known, simultaneously, as La Fundación Chinati. To turn from the hard, clear forms of mill aluminum to the shapes of cacti growing in the earth a few yards away is to see equations between the local and the more-than-local, to know at once that you are in the Southwest and in a place that is more than the Southwest, a South by Southwest that may exist only in an artist's imagination. ■

The Nobu Novel

By JAMES WOOD

Fury
by Salman Rushdie

(Random House, 259 pp., $24.95)

FURY, A NOVEL that exhausts negative superlatives, that is likely to make even its most charitable readers furious, is a flailing apologia. It tells the story of an Indian professor, Malik Solanka, who has recently left his English wife of fifteen years and their three-year-old son, and flown from London to Manhattan. Professor Solanka, who has made a lot of money by inventing and marketing a puppet, comes to America desperate to erase his past, to start over again, and to bury the guilt he feels not only about his separation but about a moment of "fury" in which he had held a knife over his wife's sleeping form and imagined stabbing her.

But in Manhattan—the boiling, zany, money-fattened Manhattan of the end of the millennium—Professor Solanka finds not peace but only a universal fury, and he obsessively wanders the streets, a tormented flâneur, angrily observing the madness of contemporary American life, inflamed by "the everywhereness of life, by its bloody-minded refusal to back off, by the sheer goddamn unbearable head-bursting volume of the third millennium." Solanka has an affair with a furious Serbian woman called Mila Milo (shortened from Milosevic—you see, even her name is furious!), and then with a beautiful Indian woman called Neela, "by some distance the most beautiful Indian woman—the most beautiful *woman*—he had ever seen." But Neela is furious in her way too—she is a political activist—and after some wild adventures Solanka loses her to that fury. The novel ends with Solanka returning to London and taking a suite at Claridge's, where he "lay wide-eyed and rigid in his comfortable bed, listening to the noises of distant fury." The next day he spies pitifully on his estranged wife and son as they walk on Hampstead Heath.

The novel appears to be an apologia in part because it is nimbused by a dirty cloud of reality. Many readers will know that Rushdie himself has suffered an actual separation from an English wife and child, and has embarked on a new life in America, and has a beautiful Indian girlfriend whom he met at the launch party of *Talk* magazine. Quite apart from these meshings of subject and theme, the novel seems to want us to read it as a species of feverish diary. *Fury* might as well be time-stamped, and

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it might itself be entitled *Talk*: most of it is relentlessly set in the New York of last year, and records, as if offering the pages of a calendar, the city's large and small events.

Thus we read about the Puerto Rican Day parade that ended in rapes, about Courtney Love. There are knowing references to Tom Ford of Gucci, Meg Ryan and Dennis Quaid, Monica Lewinsky, Naomi Campbell, Mark Wahlberg, Saul and Gayfryd Steinberg, Sophie Dahl, Lara Croft, Dave Eggers, Charlie Rose, Tommy Hilfiger, and so on. This is a novel that contains the sentence: "Thanks to Buffy on TV, vampires were hot." And this:

> The season's hit movie portrayed the decadence of Caesar Joaquin Phoenix's imperial Rome, in which honor and dignity, not to mention life-and-death actions and distractions, were to be found only in the computer-regenerated illusion of the great gladiatorial arena.... In New York too, there were circuses as well as bread: a musical about lovable lions, a bike race on Fifth, Springsteen at the Garden with a song about the forty-one police gunshots that killed Amadou Diallo, the police union's threat to boycott the Boss's concert, Hillary *vs.* Rudy, a cardinal's funeral, a movie about lovable dinosaurs, the motorcades of two largely interchangeable presidential candidates (Gush, Bore), Hillary *vs.* Rick ... a cartoon about lovable British chickens, and even a literary festival....

Flourishing its glamorous congestion, *Fury* is immediately obsolete; its trivia tattoo has already faded. The decision to soften the task of fictional representation, to relax mimesis to this level of muscleless gossip, this bare recording of social facts, is obviously disastrous. For a start, it abolishes form: why should Rushdie's list ever end? There will always be a few more movies to include, and next weekend's parties. And when a writer is recording minor events only because they occurred, it is hard not to flatter them, hard not to be grateful to them for the small tenacity of their occurrence. Thus in the passage above, and throughout the novel, although Solanka (and, one imagines, Rushdie) seems to want to complain about all this ephemera and noise, and even to resist it, the actual tone of the citations is something closer to complacency, a clammy and hospitable irony. (One notes the very witty reference to the *New Yorker* literary festival at which Rushdie himself appeared.)

Of course, all this weightless volume of reference is supposed to be part of "the fury"—the white noise to Solanka's black noise. We are often asked to picture Solanka lying on his bed with his hands around his ears, trying to banish the noise of Manhattan, "a city of half-truths and echoes that somehow dominates the earth." It is hard not to catch the tone of confession once again, the sound of a request for absolution: if a general fury surrounds Solanka, then perhaps his own sharp fury is less culpable, because he has merely been dipped, like the novel, in the madness of the times. And why should we blame Solanka for leaving his wife if he is inflamed, poor fellow, by nothing less than the instability of the fin-de-siècle? Perhaps the problem with the abandoned Mrs. Solanka—who, we are told, wanted more children, unlike her "furious" husband—was that she was just not furious enough? Too "English," and not sufficiently "American"?

IT MAY SEEM unfair to make Rushdie merge with Solanka, but the novel's own corruptions force the identity. There is, throughout the book, a grievous uncertainty about whose voice is speaking. On the one hand, we are introduced to a supposedly fastidious European voyeur, who appreciates "the old European subtleties": "old-world, dandyish, cane-twirling little Solly Solanka in straw Panama hat and cream linen suit went by on his afternoon walk." Solanka is essentially an Indian version of Mr. Sammler; he even has the Jewish nickname Solly. As in Bellow, descriptions and criticisms are generally prefaced or followed by an almost programmatic "Professor Solanka thought." So we get: "America insulted the rest of the world, thought Malik Solanka in his old-fashioned way," or: "Solanka marveled, once again, at the human capacity for automorphosis," and so on.

On the other hand, what does Solanka choose to see, and how does he represent it? What is Mr. Solanka's Planet? Here the novel disastrously wavers. It seems, in fact, that "old-world" Solanka is enormously interested in, and utterly *au fait* with, the celebrity houses in the Hamptons, the fancy new Manhattan restaurants Nobu and Pastis, Ellen DeGeneres, Tony Soprano, and Jennifer Lopez. At one moment Solanka recalls that his first wife was probably somewhere in Manhattan: "Sara Lear was probably right here in town, he suddenly thought. She would be in her late fifties now, a big shot with a booming portfolio, the secret booking numbers for Pastis and Nobu, and a weekend place south of the highway in, ah, Amagansett." Now, one sees why Sara Lear might know the secret numbers to Nobu and Pastis, but why would "old-world" Professor Solanka know them? At another moment

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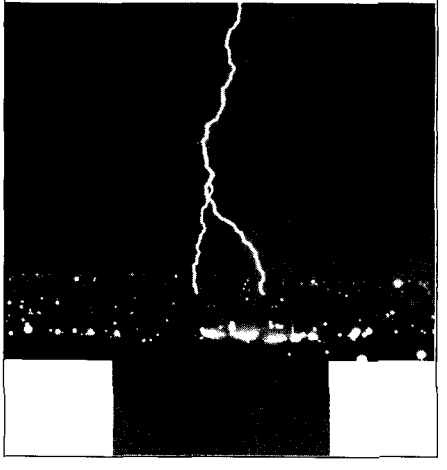

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Solanka reflects that although he feels he may be going mad, he will be "avoiding head doctors. The gangster Tony Soprano might be going to a shrink, but fuck him, he was fictional. Professor Solanka had resolved to face the demon himself." At another moment he sees posters for *The Cell*:

> There were posters everywhere for *The Cell*, the new Jennifer Lopez movie. In it, Lopez was miniaturized and injected into the brain of a serial killer. It sounded like a remake of *Fantastic Voyage*, starring Raquel Welch, but so what? Nobody remembered the original. Everything's a copy, an echo of the past, thought Professor Solanka. A song for Jennifer: *We're living in a retro world and I'm a retrograde girl.*

So Solanka, who seems to think that the corrective possession of deep historical memory will consist in familiarity with a Raquel Welch movie, also knows his Madonna.

And then there is the language in which Solanka makes his observations. For an Anglicized Indian professor, a former fellow of King's College, Cambridge (Rushdie's own former college) who has never before lived in America, Solanka's diction has gone peculiarly native. Solanka uses "gotten" and not "got," and thinks of one man as "his pal, his best buddy," and recalls getting "jiggy beside a big-assed Puerto Rican girl," and talks of "shrinks" and "head-doctors," of "industry mavens," of "goddamn" noise and "the cheesiest daytime soap." When he complains to Neela about American power, he jitters explosively like someone trapped in a Philip Roth novel: "But, Solanka wanted to say, rising to the bait, what's wrong is wrong, and because of the immense goddamn *power* of America, the immense fucking *seduction* of America." One way of manufacturing a proper American "fury," clearly, is with the frequent oiling of the word "goddamn."

Is Solanka thinking or is Rushdie thinking? This is not a small complaint; not just a pedantic fussing about "point of view." For this instability of voice, this anarchy of borrowed languages, infiltrates and infects the fabric of the storytelling. A cartoonish and inauthentic voice produces a cartoonish and inauthentic reality. Consider the following fluorescences: "this glowing six-foot Cruella De Vil fashion plate of a mother"; "erect, wiry, with Albert Einstein white hair and Bugs Bunny front teeth"; "the owner-manager, a Raul Julia lookalike"; "she had become the Maya Angelou of the doll world"; "a petite Southern belle . . . who was a dead ringer for the cartoon sexpot Betty Boop"; "tall and skinny, with a sexy John Travolta quiff"; "a Stockard Channing of the near-at-hand" (a particularly unfortunate echo of Augie March's self-characterization as a "Columbus of those near-at-hand").

All these vulgarities, these hazy swipes at vivacity, are characters (so-called) in *Fury*, and all are seen in these terms by Professor Solanka. Striving to be vivid, this writing produces only something smaller than life, because distanced and mediated by anterior images: when a man is described as having Bugs Bunny teeth, you see Bugs Bunny, you do not see the man. Or perhaps you do not even see Bugs Bunny—who, frankly, would be a relief in place of the actual owner of the Einstein hair and the Bugs Bunny teeth, an octogenarian plumber named Joseph Schlink, who arrives one day to mend Professor Solanka's lavatory. Schlink speaks, writes Rushdie, "with the unimproved accent of the transplanted German Jew," and commits this monologue:

> My name amuses you? So laugh. The chentleman, Mr. Simon, calls me Kitchen Schlink, to his Mrs. Ada I'm also Bathroom Schlink, let zem call me Schlink the Bismarck, it von't bother me, it's a free country, but in my business I haff no use for humor. In Latin, *humor* is a dampness from the eye. This is to quote Heinrich Böll, Nobel Prize nineteen hundred seventy-two. In his line of vork he alleges it's helpful, but in my job it leads to mistakes. No damp eyes on me, eh?, and no chokes in my tool bag. Chust I like to do the vork prompt, receive payment also prompt, you follow me here. Like the *shvartzer* says in the movie, show me the money. After a war spent plugging leaks on a Nazi U-boat, you think I can't fix up your little doofus here?

Salman Rushdie by Alexandra MacMaster for The New Republic

This cartoonishness, which has been Rushdie's weakness throughout his career, and which has been lucky enough over the years to be flattered by the term "magical realism," only proves that he is incapable of writing realistically—and thus oddly confirms the prestige of realism, confirms its difficulty, its hard challenge, its true rigor.

It needs to be said again and again, since Rushdie's style of exuberance has been so influential, that such vividness is not vivacious, that in fact it encodes a fear of true vivacity, a kind of awkwardness or embarrassment in the face of the lifelike. There are certain kinds of critics who equate excess with nourishment, like someone who believes that only a fat baby is a healthy one. Such readers are doubtless likely to announce that Rushdie's new novel is "full of wonders, among them a learned riff on Raquel Welch and

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a plumber who looks like Einstein and chats easily about Heinrich Böll!" (This kind of critic always has a pen that whittles exclamation points!) It sometimes seems that this is now the only kind of reading performed in America. But true vivacity—which is not necessarily the same as mere lifelikeness—has no need to shout. It goes by, in Yeats's words, with white footfall.

In general, Rushdie's observations pound a wilderness between incredibility and banality. Certainly the form of the novel is not suited to his screaming color-range. Like a good number of contemporary novels, *Fury* makes use of the idea of an overloaded flâneur—a man goes out to record, with all the writer's fineness of observation on his side, what the writer would have seen were the writer able to speak autobiographically, like the "I" of a Romantic poem.

The flâneur, of course, was born in Romantic poetry—the Wordsworth of *The Prelude* quite as much as Baudelaire—before being born again in modern prose in Benjamin, and in *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*, and even in *Nausea* and *Mrs. Dalloway*. To this tradition, the contemporary novel adds the plausible idea that such a flâneur is not merely the writer's agent, but is in some ways a too-porous scout who has lost his way. The old maps have gone, and the new signs are unreadable; and so the modern flâneur is driven mad by the indecipherable abundance of contemporary signification. Bellow's Herzog stands on a sidewalk grate in Manhattan, and feels the roughened surface "like Braille under his feet." The world pours in illegibly: it is Braille for those who cannot read it, the wrong answers to the wrong questions. Rushdie would like to add Professor Solanka, furiously reeling from fury, from "the everywhereness of life," to this literary inheritance.

Yet this is a difficult form to sustain, because it is managed and propelled largely by writerly tact and brilliance. In ordinary hands, where such brilliance is missing, the flâneur novel becomes merely a chance for the writer to have his say about some matters that occupy him; the novel becomes a series of ambulatory essays of variable interest and quality. *Fury* is a failure of this kind, because Rushdie lacks the literary fineness that is needed to keep descriptive analysis interesting. The prose is, without exception, flat and unoriginal, so that the details that Solanka observes lack any flame.

And the analysis is itself often startlingly banal. Here is Solanka-Rushdie on TV ads:

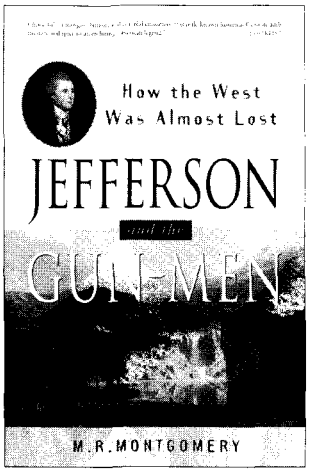
> the commercials soothed America's pain, its head pain, its gas pain, its heartache, its loneliness, the pain of babyhood and old age, of being a parent and of being a child, the pain of manhood and women's pain, the pain of success and that of failure, the good pain of the athlete and the bad pain of the guilty, the anguish of loneliness and of ignorance, the needle-sharp torment of the cities and the dull, mad ache of the empty plains, the pain of wanting without knowing what was wanted, the agony of the howling void within each watching, semiconscious self. No wonder advertising was popular. It made things better. It showed you the road. It wasn't part of the problem. It solved things.

Apart from suffering the inconvenient disadvantage of being completely untrue, this passage is just a piece of "writing."

Worse, the flâneur novel, if weakened to pointlessness by limited literary talents, is entirely nullified by the magical-realist or cartoonish impulse. If the flâneur is not an empiricist or an idealist, but only a candy-colored animator, he might as well not go out onto the streets at all. Rushdie might reply that, far from failing at realism, he does not even attempt it, because he does not believe in it—hence the "magic" of his rollicking, unrealistic exuberance. To which the proper retort is that representation is both a realism and a magic. Fiction is itself chimerical, the manufacturing of inventions; and the effect of adding magic to chimera is not a kind of doubling of the chimerical, not a mere raising of the fictional temperature, but merely a mirage-like false heat, resulting in total disappearance. For this reason, Schlink the plumber, the octogenarian European Jew, literally disappears into his "vividness" before our eyes. His complexity, his social history, his secret wants and sadnesses, his actual comedy: all this is abolished by excess, as great noise becomes finally inaudible.

The irresponsibility of this kind of "lively" writing becomes more apparent the nearer it aspires to conventional realism. For the nearer it reaches the real, the greater the surface of the real that it desecrates. Solanka sees a "middle-aged African-American woman sitting on the next bench," eating her way through "a long egg salad hero, advertising her enjoyment of every mouthful with loud *mms* and *uh-huhs*." The unwitting condescension of this vignette, the garishness of its minstrelsy—these blacks, the passage seems to scream, for them even a sandwich merits a gospel chorus!—is optimistically

Schemers, blackguards, braggarts, and the imperial ambitions of Aaron Burr



Just three decades after the revolution that gave birth to the United States, another insurgency was already brewing, this time led by the charming—and treacherous—Aaron Burr. The former vice president had determined that if he could not be master of his nation, he would instead become, with the help of some of the young nation's most unforgettable characters, emperor of the Louisiana Territory. *Jefferson and the Gun-Men* is the riveting story of an unlikely conspiracy to foment a second American Revolution.

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balanced by the wised-up correctness of the terminology: the lady may carry on like a crazy mama, but she is still an "African-American woman." Of course.

Perhaps Rushdie, in comparing his characters to film actors and the like, is making a point about the society of spectacle, about the ineradicably mediated nature of the contemporary American world? Look, even Professor Solanka cannot escape this corruption: he sees Jennifer Lopez and immediately thinks of Madonna! But to poison a whole book is a very lengthy way of making a point about a single modern germ. Besides, Solanka supposedly dislikes all this "fury"; it is he who condemns this "retro age," "this age of simulacra and counterfeits."

ALAS, THE CONTRADICTIONS of Rushdie's book (we are told also that the terrifically knowing Solanka apparently felt "alienated" by "the anonymous faces in magazines, faces that all Americans somehow recognized at once"), the unlikely vulgarities of Professor Solanka, taken alongside his equally incredible American argot, are so distorting that they abolish him as a character, and leave him only as a figment of Rushdie's painful confessional urge. Alas, *Fury* does not seem to present Mr. Solanka's Planet so much as Mr. Rushdie's Planet, which is all secret numbers for Nobu and fancy houses in the Hamptons. One sees now why Solanka-Rushdie reverently calls New York "a city of half-truths and echoes that somehow dominates the earth." It is because Solanka's idea of Manhattan is no deeper than the idea of the man who is "a Raul Julia lookalike." Indeed, the Manhattan of *Fury* is a city of half-truths precisely because Solanka-Rushdie peoples it with cartoons: Schlink is one of those walking half-truths.

And not just Manhattan. America, too, is seen cartoonishly in this book. Solanka, you recall, has come to America "to be devoured.... He had come to America as so many before him, to receive the benison of being Ellis Islanded, of starting over. Give me a name, America, make of me a Buzz or Chip or Spike. Bathe me in amnesia and clothe me in your powerful unknowing. Enlist me in your J. Crew and hand me my mouse ears!" And thirty pages later Solanka returns to this theme:

> He had flown to the land of self-creation ... the country whose paradigmatic modern fiction was the story of a man who remade himself, his past, his present, his shirts, even his name for love ... his old self must somehow be canceled, put away for good. And if he failed, then he failed, but one did not contemplate what lay beyond failure while one was still trying to succeed. After all, Jay Gatsby, the highest bouncer of them all, failed too in the end, but lived out, before he crashed, that brilliant, brittle, gold-hatted, exemplary life.

There is luxurious condescension in this trite prayerfulness. Perhaps Rushdie is unaware of the disdain that menaces his apparently laudatory words. The idea of America as a place of "amnesia" and "unknowing" represents a perfect coincidence of old-fashioned European dismissal and new-fashioned postmodern naïveté: in the older vision, America is disapprovingly seen as the country with no real history; in the postmodern vision, America is approvingly seen as the country with no real history, as one enormous inauthentic Disneyland, handing out Mickey Mouse ears to its grinning immigrants.

"Give me a name, America, make of me a Buzz or Chip or Spike": Rushdie seems not to realize that this might be a land of real names rather than a playground of floating signifiers, that some actual Chips and Spikes live in America, that amazingly enough they have histories, even American histories, and do not stride forgetfully through clouds of "unknowing." Why, they might even know enough to not know what Nobu is! And Rushdie, solemnly deciding that America's founding modern myth is Gatsby's self-creation, seems unaware that there was the slightest tincture of irony or moral censure in Fitzgerald's novel. It is as if Solanka were saying to himself: Gatsby did it, so I do it, too. But the force of Fitzgerald's story was that Gatsby's life, however "brilliant," was a failure not because it crashed (Rushdie's apparently consequentialist standpoint), but because Gatsby's ambition itself was corrupt.

GIVEN THESE MORAL tremors, which speak brokenly throughout the novel, it seems preposterous and surprising when Solanka-Rushdie begins to plume himself up as a moralist towards the end of the book, excoriating America's corruption by materialism. Suddenly Solanka has forsaken fascination with fashion, and is deciding the world, and ringing the metaphysical emergency-bell: "All around him, the American self was reconceiving itself in mechanical terms, but was everywhere running out of control.... For the real problem was damage not to the machine but to the desirous heart, and the language of the heart was being lost." (The upholstered syntax, the placement of the word "everywhere"—"everywhere running out"—denotes an antique moral seriousness and hauteur.)

Dazzled by the lovely and ardent Neela, Solanka appears to discover a conscience. He reflects that "behind the facade of this age of gold, this time of plenty, the contradictions and impoverishment of the Western human individual, or let's say the human self in America, were deepening and widening." All of a sudden Manhattan becomes "this Metropolis ... wealth was mistaken for riches and the joy of possession for happiness, where people lived such polished lives that the great rough truths of raw existence had been rubbed and buffed away":

> O Dream-America, was civilization's quest to end in obesity and trivia, at Roy Rogers and Planet Hollywood, in *USA Today* and on E! ... or even at the unattainable tables of Jean-Georges Vongerichten and Alain Ducasse? Yes, it had seduced him, America; yes, its brilliance aroused him, and its vast potency too, and he was compromised by this seduction. What he opposed in it he must also attack in himself. It made him want what it promised and eternally withheld.

But it is too late to be coming on like Dreiser in *Sister Carrie*, flaying the corruptions of "The Walled City." This is supposedly a moral castigation, and perhaps a form of confession, but is it not really cousin to the earlier condescension? For Rushdie's view of corrupted America is as vulgar as his vision of uncorrupted America. The uncorrupted "devourer," the savior and eraser of the self, was Mickey Mouse; the corrupted civilization, against which he supposedly pits himself, is Roy Rogers, and possibly Alain Ducasse. Take your pick. But *Fury* speaks the language of corruption anyway, and so it has no rock, no Dreiserian sidewalk or Bellovian altitude, from which to launch this ethical armada. It has apparently been corrupted by the very corruption that it decries. It is Rushdie-Solanka, after all, who seems to have his head filled with Tony Soprano and J-Lo and Alain Ducasse. Perhaps the corruption here lies in knowing enough about such tiny figures to accuse them of being corrupters in the first place? Who will corrupt the corrupters? And so Rushdie manages the remarkable feat of being simultaneously Euro-condescending and American-debased.

It is one thing to write an allegory or an apologia about how America has compromised one's soul, but it is quite another to publish a novel that so emphatically re-enacts that compromise. ■

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Class Acts

By IAN BURUMA

Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire by David Cannadine

(Oxford University Press, 240 pp., $25)

WHEN HITLER WISHED to relax after a hard day at the office, he liked to watch films in his private screening room. Nazi propaganda movies were not his favorite entertainment; they felt too much like work. Hitler liked swashbuckling Hollywood films, and one picture in particular: *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, starring Gary Cooper and C. Aubrey Smith. It was propaganda for the British Empire, of course, with its gallant British heroes cutting a swath through the lesser breeds. But the Führer rather admired the British Empire.

Like many Germans, Hitler envied the way the British exercised their power. He approved of an enterprise in which white men ruled much of the world. He would have liked nothing better than to carve up the globe between his own *Herrenvolk* and purebred Englishmen. Just imagine: a world dominated by SS men and Bengal Lancers. Hitler, and some of his supporters, also had a curious admiration for Benjamin Disraeli, the first and only British prime minister of Jewish descent, whose phrase "race is all" was much quoted in Germany. Carl Schmitt, the prominent Nazi jurist, is said to have had a portrait of *der alte Jude* above his desk.

If David Cannadine is to be believed, Hitler got the wrong end of the stick about the British Empire. And so did (and still do, in fact) the armies of diligent toilers in the mines of postcolonial discourse and other narratives of Orientalism: according to Cannadine, race was not everything in the British Raj. It was not even the main point. Class was the main point. Class, status, and rank were more important than skin color, the shape of one's eyes, or the dimensions of one's skull. A Sultan, a Nizam, or a Pasha was equal to British royalty, even if the Queen-Empress or King-Emperor residing in Windsor was perched securely at the top of the imperial tree. In Queen Victoria's eyes, King Kalakaua of Hawaii was one of us, so to speak, while a respectable tradesman from Birmingham, though blessed with the pinkest complexion, most decidedly was not.

When King Kalakaua attended a grand "do" at Lady Spencer's in 1881, the Prince of Wales insisted that the Hawaiian monarch should take precedence over the German crown prince, who was later to become Kaiser Wilhelm II. When the touchy German protested, the prince held firm. "Either the brute is a king, or he is a common or garden nigger; and if the latter, what's he doing here?" It was not a particularly charming remark; but, as Cannadine rightly says, it was not primarily a racist one either, for "the freemasonry" of rank trumped "the alternative and more recent freemasonry based on the unifying characteristic of shared skin color."

Class in Britain is David Cannadine's favorite subject. His analysis of class in the imperial periphery is an expansion of his writings on class in the British homelands. Indeed, he sees both as parts of the same phenomenon: the ordering of society along hierarchical and "organic" principles, as though society in Britain and its overseas possessions were not constructed through human agency, but had grown naturally, like trees in native soil. Societies are seen by Cannadine as organisms rooted in history. It is true, of course, that all societies are rooted in history; but organic conservatives tend to argue against social or political change by claiming that such changes would not accord with the natural order, in which every person knows his or her place. It is a quasi-agrarian view, often held by those with landed interests. Aristocrats of all kinds, whether they are the Prince of Wales or the King of Tonga, like to believe that their superior status is a natural blessing, which is often literally true, since they are usually born to it. It is a view that the Americans rejected in 1776. It might not be a complete coincidence that racial hierarchy has cast a long shadow instead.

Organic politics gained in strength in Britain after the French Revolution. Napoleon—who tried to establish a common legal system and administration all over Europe, who emancipated the Jews and other persecuted minorities, and who did all this in the name of liberty, equality, and fraternity—was the antithesis of British essentialism. To counter such dangerous foreign notions, the British were told that *their* liberties were ancient and natural, and that deference to social hierarchies was in the British nature of things. French ideas about liberty and equality were said to be the opposite: rationalistic, mechanistic, unnatural. Many Britons, though by no means all, went along with this. The same was not always true in the Empire. Napoleon was a hero to many Indian intellectuals who grew up under the British Raj.

Cannadine cites Thackeray's view of England in the 1850s as "that Gothic society with its ranks and hierarchies, its cumbrous ceremonies, its glittering antique paraphernalia." Still, as Cannadine points out, much of this paraphernalia was recently invented, including the ceremonies of Empire: the splendid Durbars in Delhi; the hundreds of glittering orders of this and that; the bejeweled Nawabs, Nabobs, and Rajahs, and the viceroys in ermine and silk; the thousands of statues of kings and queens; the construction of Kingsways, Queensways, and monuments to lords, viscounts, and marquesses; the state visits and the royal birthdays—all these were meant to enhance the authority of British rule through a network of native proxies, and as a prophylactic against change abroad and at home.

THE ORIGINAL ARCHITECT of all this sorcery was none other than Benjamin Disraeli, the man who bewitched his queen with eloquent flattery and dazzled his peers with fables of Jews as the most ancient of aristocratic races, which would save old England from falling apart in a frightening new age of industry, urban disobedience, and foreign egalitarianism. It was Disraeli who made Queen Victoria the Empress of India, who oversaw the creation of all kinds of new honors and baubles, and who said that "it is only by the amplification of titles that you can often touch and satisfy the imagination of nations." The fact that he, the grandson of an Italian Jew, managed to become Lord Beaconsfield would seem to prove Cannadine's point about status trumping race. But it is not so simple. The fact that Disraeli felt the need to convince English squires that Jews were an aristocratic race, and as such by nature bound to the English, complicates our picture of Victorian racial geography. Some

IAN BURUMA's new book, *Bad Elements: Chinese Rebels from Los Angeles to Beijing*, will be published this fall by Random House.

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races were clearly thought to be superior to others.

Cannadine does not deny this, but in his effort to make his case for class over color he does not give it enough attention. The fetish made in the British Empire of the so-called "warrior races" needs explaining. Cannadine does allude to this. He writes that some British (or, more usually, English) conservatives had romantic views of native ruling classes overseas who were deemed to be superior to the softened citizens of the old metropole, or indeed to the white trash that populated the New World. Lord Curzon, for example, lauded the princes in India, who, "amid the levelling tendencies of the age," kept "alive the traditions and customs, sustain[ed] the virility, and sav[ed] from extinction, the picturesqueness of ancient and noble races."

A more recent admirer of noble races was Wilfred Thesiger, the writer who projected the virtues of an older (and to some degree imaginary) England onto tall, handsome tribesmen in Africa and the Middle East. The common disdain among upper-class British "Arabists" for Jewish settlers in Palestine, and later in Israel, was linked to this idea of pure and vigorous warrior races. Zionism, with its egalitarian, socialist, and modernist tendencies, was seen as a wrecker of ancient and noble ways. (Certain German conservatives after World War II admired Israelis for the opposite reason: they found the image of the Jews as a warrior race rather congenial. But that is another story.) Bookish Bengalis, who were often better versed in European culture than their British masters, were commonly despised, while the strapping Pathans of the Northwest Frontier were lauded as fine specimens. It might not be so fruitful to apply class analysis to such distinctions, for although it is true that Bengali intellectuals represented the city, while Pathans and other "warrior races" were associated more with rural life, the Calcutta elite also formed an aristocracy of sorts.

It is a shame that Cannadine does not compare the British Empire more thoroughly to other European (or American) colonial enterprises, for this would have enriched his analysis considerably. He is on to something, I think, when he claims that class distinctions tended to blur racial differences. Upper-class Indians were treated with a degree of equality by the British. They joined colonial clubs, they played cricket with English teams, and their sons attended English schools. Both Nehru, a product of Harrow School, and Jinnah, the first prime minister of Pakistan, were English-style gentlemen as well as nationalist politicians.

But society in the Dutch East Indies was rather different. In that empire, minute racial distinctions were strictly observed, and even during World War II, after the Japanese invasion, members of the Indonesian elite who had chosen to escape to Australia with the Dutch colonial government were not allowed into the Dutch Club in Sydney. Class was, to a large extent, racial. The "pure" Dutch were on top; then came the "Indos," who had native blood, but were educated in Dutch; then the half-breeds who were raised as natives; and, at the bottom of the pile, the natives. The Indonesian nobility was paid some respect, but it enjoyed less political power than the Indian princes, who did not have much. Holland was more egalitarian than Britain. Dutch aristocracy hardly counted in politics, so there was never a question of exporting metropolitan hierarchies to the colonies, or using exotic Asian hierarchies as models for the metropole. So, to paraphrase Cannadine, one might say that in the Dutch overseas possessions, race trumped class.

The French example also shows that class was not all. Unlike the British or the Dutch, who were content to leave native culture alone if it did not gravely offend Christian prejudices, the French had a universalistic view of their civilization. Instead of French political hierarchy, they exported French culture. This was an arrogant thing to do, perhaps, and it was much criticized by nineteenth-century German idealists, who saw the French *mission civilisatrice* as the worst kind of imperialism; but it did allow people from other races to become part of the francophone elite. If you were well versed in Racine and Voltaire, and knew how to drink a fine claret, and were civilized in the French manner, you were accepted as "one of us." In French Indochina or French Africa, then, culture was the trump card that could transcend racial distinctions.

None of this is to say that Cannadine's description of the British Empire is wrong, only that its focus is narrow, which is perhaps inevitable in a thin and little-nuanced book. He makes his case about class, and he bangs it home long after the reader has got the point. The clarity of his "message" does not allow for many complications. He is quite right to say that the organic view of class politics is essentially conservative, and he quotes the architect of imperial Delhi, Sir Edwin Lutyens, to good effect. India, like Africa, made Sir Edwin feel "very Tory and pre-Tory feudal." And it may well be true that many British builders of empire shared the sentiments of Charles Temple, who lived in Nigeria before the Great War, and "admired aristocracy, despised individualism and regarded European capitalism as a decadent form of society." The "duty of colonial trusteeship," in his view, lay in "protecting the virtues of northern aristocratic life and its communal economy from the 'barbarizing' effects of European capitalism, democracy and individualism."

And yet the British, on the whole, have left a more successful legacy of capitalism, rule of law, and democracy than most former colonial trustees. This would suggest that there was more to the white man's burden than reactionary romanticism. Cannadine acknowledges the growth in imperial possessions of an educated, urban, nationalist, often rebellious native elite, infused with democratic ideals. But they must have gotten this from somewhere. He puts it all down to "technological transformations." I do not believe that this is an entirely adequate explanation.

Is it not the case, after all, that British imperialism carried various projects, not all of which were conservative? Especially in India, but also in Southeast Asia, and even in Africa, the British *mission civilisatrice* was political, and sometimes, if perhaps late in the day, rather progressive. The same was true, by the way, of Disraelian Tory politics in Britain: traditionalist flimflam often served as a colorful smokescreen to mask quite radical changes. What is left in such places as Malaysia, Zimbabwe, or Hong Kong of an independent judiciary is still largely due to the imperial legacy. Indian democracy—which, despite is glaring flaws, is still a modern miracle—owes something to the British, too.

British colonialism planted the seeds of anti-colonialism, through education as much as through technological advances. Even technology was not politically neutral. The railroad system that opened India up to trade, for example, was designed to expand British industrial interests, to be sure, but it hardly fits the agrarian model of organic, aristocratic society. Once people can move easily from place to place, this kind of arcadia is bound to collapse.

The other thing that deserves to complicate Cannadine's picture is the role of the native elites. By this I do not refer to princes in golden carriages. And even in their case Cannadine is too simplistic. He contrasts the radical nationalists who came to prominence in urban Singapore in the 1950s to the reactionary sultans in Malaya. In fact, however, the Malayan prime minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, scion of an old noble line (who would have been astonished to note that Cannadine identifies him as a black African), was more demo-

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cratic than the urban "progressive" Lee Kuan Yew.

In some places, the local elite had such strong interests in colonial status that it became more conservative than the imperial governors. In the Philippines before World War II, for example, the land-owning mestizos, some of whose children and grandchildren still rule the country, wanted to prolong American colonial rule years after the American government wanted to bring the whole thing to an end. The Cantonese tycoons who managed Hong Kong under British colonial rule would have been happy to pick up their baubles and fancy titles at Buckingham Palace forever, if Beijing had not insisted on the handover in 1997. And it was they, not the British, who slapped down any suggestion of democratic reform when it was quietly mooted by British colonial officers in the 1950s. When Chris Patten tried to introduce democratic reforms at the last minute, his main adversaries were from that same local Chinese elite (apart, of course, from the comrades themselves).

But this is all water under the bridge now. The last vestiges of the world described by Cannadine only barely live on in the old country. Aristocrats and privately educated gentlemen no longer govern England, and the House of Windsor is fast becoming a vulgar soap opera, still revered by some but treated with indifference by many. The baubles and the titles and the rituals of deference are still there, though: in recent months the British nation has been transfixed by the story of the best-selling author and popular fantasist Jeffrey Archer, who always pretended to be grander than he was, collected friends in high places, climbed his way into the upper ranks of the Tory Party, made it into the House of Lords, gave absurdly lavish parties, almost became mayor of London, and was finally unmasked as a fraud. Baron Archer of Weston-Super-Mare would have made a splendid governor of Bombay. ■

Deaf-blindness and the meaning of life.

The Marble Cell

By Roger Shattuck

I.

On January 22, 1842, the thirty-year-old Charles Dickens, already celebrated for five successful books, landed in Boston with his wife after eighteen days of a rough crossing. Dickens toured the United States for five months, wrote as he went, and published *American Notes* by the end of the year. The forty-page chapter on Boston, the longest in the book, opens with brief references to missing a sermon by the great Unitarian philanthropist Dr. Ellery Channing, and to the benign local influence of "the University of Cambridge." An equally brief section at the end of the chapter mentions the "blue ladies" of Boston and a certain "Transcendental" follower of Carlyle named Ralph Waldo Emerson. Dickens approves: "If I were a Bostonian, I think I would be a Transcendentalist." He mentions no other Boston author—not Hawthorne, not Longfellow, not Holmes; and he appears to have heard nothing about the tempestuous religious and political controversies surrounding Horace Mann's championing of the common school.

For the twenty central pages of his account of Boston, Dickens found a subject more to his liking than literature and politics. He visited one of the city's famous public institutions, the Perkins Asylum for the Blind. There he "met" and talked through an interpreter with a remarkable personage, a twelve-year-old girl, fair of face and form, blind, deaf, and dumb since the age of two. The girl's name was Laura Bridgman. Through carefully planned training over a period of four years, Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, director of the Perkins Asylum, had taught Laura a language of raised letters forming English words referring to things. Almost simultaneously she learned to finger-spell those words into another person's hand, and to receive such messages. After a fashion, the statue could talk.

To this unprecedented encounter Dickens responded with vivid words and dramatic sentiments, and with none of the wry politeness that he directed toward the rest of Boston society: "There she was before me; built up, as it were, in a marble cell, impervious to any ray of light, or particle of sound; with her poor white hand peeping through a chink in the wall, beckoning to some good man for help, that an Immortal soul might be awakened." Visitors had already begun trudging out to the Perkins Asylum in South Boston on Saturdays to see Laura. The accounts of her plight and her accomplishments published by Howe in his annual reports from 1837 on had created enormous interest in her case, and unbeatable publicity for the asylum. Dickens unhesitatingly quoted ten pages from Howe's reports on the girl's background, her "well-formed figure," her generally pliant behavior, and her advances in language.

For the following decade, as great waves of philanthropy, reform, and abolition swept across the country, Laura continued to draw crowds to her Saturday exhibitions with the other blind students. Arriving in New England precisely when the cultural and intellectual currents in Boston were swirling into a pattern later to be called the American Renaissance, Dickens chose to pay homage not to writers, but to the young girl distinguished by the severity of her physical handicaps and her response to rehabilitation. His chapter made Laura Bridgman famous around the world. It also celebrated Dr. Howe, the man of "Noble Usefulness" who had saved her soul from darkness.

In neglecting the conventions of polite society in his tale of Boston, Dickens was following his novelist's nose for a good human story. Behind her fair features and her discreetly blindfolded eye sockets, Laura embodied a contradictory mix of

The Education of Laura Bridgman: The First Deaf and Blind Person to Learn Language
by Ernest Freeberg
(Harvard University Press, 264 pp., $27.95)

The Imprisoned Guest: Samuel Howe and Laura Bridgman, the Original Deaf-Blind Girl
by Elisabeth Gitter
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 341 pp., $26)

Helen Keller: A Life
by Dorothy Herrmann
(Alfred A. Knopf, 395 pp., $30)

Roger Shattuck is University Professor Emeritus at Boston University and the author, most recently, of *Candor and Perversion: Literature, Education, and the Arts* (Norton) and *Proust's Way* (Norton).

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impediments and distinctions. Blindness has always been associated—in Homer, in Tiresias, in Milton—with the higher vision of the bard and the prophet. Deafness suggests a pathology so deep as to produce, if left unattended, stupidity, idiocy, and madness. Laura seemed to combine both spiritual fates: she held within her the image of the wild child, untamed, making strange cries, and yet purer than the rest of us. Much of what has been written about Laura transformed her immediately into legend.

Laura was born in 1829 to a poor farming family in New Hampshire. When she was barely two, a lively, normal child and beginning to talk, a severe illness, scarlet fever or meningitis, killed her two sisters and deprived Laura completely of sight and hearing. After a very slow recovery, she was socialized by her overworked mother and by a sympathetic bachelor neighbor. He led her on long rambles in the countryside. Laura lost all language, and replaced it with a few tactile pats and prods, and performed rudimentary household chores.

The man who came on horseback from Boston to claim her was a handsome thirty-year-old medical doctor who had fought gloriously in the Greek revolution and whose philanthropic ideals impelled him to found the New England (later the Perkins) Asylum for the Blind in 1832. He would remain its director for the rest of his life. Samuel Gridley Howe was a dedicated doctor, widely connected, stubborn, and a natural publicist. Partially to outshine the competing institution, Gallaudet's American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford, Howe resolved to find a deaf and blind child to instruct. This would provide the ultimate challenge. No such child had been trained in any language.

For Howe, Laura Bridgman was a godsend—an intelligent, pretty, tractable girl of seven, whose parents agreed to entrust her to Howe's care. Between 1837 and 1850, when her training ended, Laura learned slowly yet steadily to associate written words in raised letters, and then manually spelled words, with the things and the events and the notions of the world. Howe devised this method, relying on a few precedents from French educators in the past.

Howe spent long hours with her, and also delegated much of her painstaking training to three successive young women of remarkable gifts and patience. Laura's inquisitiveness exhausted them and overflowed any set curriculum. All their work was recorded in notebooks, and at intervals it was described by Howe in his annual report to the trustees of his institution. These reports circulated internationally and brought fame to the school, and to Howe, and to Laura. He had accomplished an impossible philanthropic feat. During this period, Howe married a prominent wife, Julia Ward of New York, and espoused many causes, including the abolition of slavery, the common school (Horace Mann was one of his closest friends), and phrenology.

COURTESY HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Laura Bridgman, late 1840s

Laura was only partially aware that she lived at the center of a whirlwind constantly set in motion by her mentor. She returned to her family in New Hampshire for most summers. Otherwise, she lived at the Perkins School all her life, and died there in 1889 at the age of sixty. She could never support herself and was essentially Howe's ward. She always called him "Doctor."

II.

For Howe, Laura's education represented both a triumph and a failure. She had learned to communicate fluently through finger spelling, to read raised letters, to take care of herself responsibly in an institutional setting, and to help train other blind students. When she reached twenty, she declared: "I am so glad I have been created." Howe had broken through the wall of the senses. He remained the most respected personage in her life.

But Howe had not been able to carry out a certain number of experiments associated with Laura's training, inquiries concerned with sensory perception, language, innate capacities, and the origins of religious sentiment. The girl's protected environment notwithstanding, Howe believed that others had interfered with his work. Bystanders—her attendants, or evangelizing visitors, or other blind students—must have answered her endless questions about God, creation, death, and Jesus; and their answers would have obliterated or distorted her own spontaneous ideas on those subjects. Unable to shield Laura's intellectual innocence, Howe concluded that he had lost control of her. As a result, he never wrote the book about Laura that he announced several times, and for which he had accumulated an extensive set of files and notebooks. He did not even collect the two hundred pages on her progress that he had already written over the years for the annual reports. Julia Ward Howe assumed that task in 1889, when Laura died.

By then the girl who impressed Dickens so deeply, and who for a decade in the 1840s had been almost as renowned as Queen Victoria, had faded from public view. Howe's two loyal daughters decided to write the definitive book in his place. Their research led to a celebratory volume published by Little, Brown in Boston in 1903, and heavily promoted by the distinguished Howe clan. It was called *Laura Bridgman: Dr. Howe's Famous Pupil and What He Taught Her.* The highly informative volume deserved to be widely read, but it received little attention.

History had played one of its mischievous tricks: Laura Bridgman and her champion had acquired a rival powerful

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enough to eclipse their fame. A second deaf-blind girl, this one from Alabama, had learned to communicate with her fingers and to break the silence of her living tomb. In the 1890s she and her young female teacher attained a notoriety equal to that of Laura and Howe fifty years earlier. The new girl was even out in the world and passed the entrance examinations for Radcliffe College. In 1903, she published her first book. Helen Keller's *The Story of My Life* had every appeal: plucky triumph over misfortune, two young and lovely protagonists, a genuinely moving story, and muffled controversy over the circumstances of the book's composition and significance. Her detractors among the reviewers hinted at some form of imposture.

THE SUCCESS OF Helen Keller's book impeded rather than helped the Howe sisters' book about their father and Laura Bridgman. Yet Helen had been rescued from isolation and wordlessness by a series of precedents set by Laura and Howe. Helen's mother first found hope for her daughter when she read Dickens's *American Notes*. It was Howe's son-in-law and successor at Perkins, Michael Anagnos, who chose a twenty-one-year-old teacher for Helen and sent her off to Tuscumbia, Alabama. That teacher, Annie Sullivan, herself partly blind, had been a student at Perkins for seven years, and she had learned the manual alphabet in order to talk with Laura Bridgman, who was then in her fifties. And the methods that Annie Sullivan employed to make contact with Helen's mind, and to teach her to communicate with her hand and her fingers, were based on the approach that Howe had developed to train Laura.

The great difference was that Helen and Annie, only fourteen years apart, immediately formed a symbiotic unit of mutual aid and inspiration. Within three years they became nearly a single entity, independent of the Keller family and of any institution such as Perkins. Helen and Annie were befriended, admired, and supported by Alexander Graham Bell, Mark Twain, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Dean Howells, and many others among the rich and famous. It was Helen's idea to try for a college degree and to affirm their intellectual independence. Identified by Professor Charles T. Copeland at Harvard as a gifted writer, Helen accepted the help of a young instructor of English named John Macy in producing *The Story of My Life*. Annie contributed a ninety-page section of letters to a friend in Massachusetts, rather like news bulletins, describing the first years of Helen's training. The ongoing story of Helen and Annie easily displaced the story of Laura and Howe from the previous century.

The Radcliffe degree required as much work from Annie as a reader and an interpreter as it did from Helen as a student. After that exhausting endeavor, Annie married Macy; and they lived with Helen as a highly charged threesome in a house in the Boston suburbs. Helen answered the critics of *The Story of My Life* by writing another book, called *The World I Live In*, which appeared in 1908. In fifteen essays and a long free-verse poem, she portrayed the abundant sensory world that she inhabited, the remarkable core curriculum of books that she assimilated (from Plato to Mother Goose to Darwin), and the serenity with which she reconciled naïve realism and transcendent faith. "Reality, of which visible things are the symbol, shines before my mind": there are passages in the book of an almost scriptural simplicity and strength.

During this period Helen, but not Annie, moved resolutely toward socialism, women's suffrage, and the cause of the labor unions. The newspapers gleefully followed her participation in the labor demonstrations during the Lawrence textile strike in 1912. When Annie and John's marriage broke up and financial resources dwindled, Helen and Annie went on the road as paid performers—first on the Chautauqua lecture circuit, and later as a vaudeville act among jugglers and comedians. Twice they were invited to Hollywood for grandiose movie projects; Charlie Chaplin became a devoted admirer. Helen almost eloped with a young man employed as her secretary, and continued to receive marriage offers from strangers.

Helen and Annie, accompanied by a companion, traveled all over the world, were welcomed by heads of state, and visited the poor and afflicted. Annie's health declined seriously, and she died in 1936. Helen spent her last years in the employ of the American Foundation for the Blind in New York. There were several more books and controversies. Living on into her eighties, she became a public institution of courage and dedication. She lived to see a successful play about herself and Annie, William Gibson's *The Miracle Worker*. (It was turned into an even more successful movie in 1962.) She died in 1968.

III.

IT SEEMS ALMOST impossible that such a turbulent life could belong to a human being who, after her first nineteen months, never heard the sound of another voice or the sound of her own voice, and never saw anyone else or herself in a mirror, and at the age of seven had to be "broken" like a wild horse. This is the extraordinary woman who helped to make us aware of how much can be done to help many of the deaf and blind who live and even thrive in our world. But who knows Helen Keller today? Thirty years ago, I visited and lectured at a dozen New England high schools. In most of the schools I noticed in the eleventh-grade classroom a shelf filled with copies of *The Story of My Life*, often next to a shelf filled with copies of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. But now Keller's book has disappeared from schoolroom shelves and from many reading lists for young people. Currently available editions of the book often omit the essential section of Annie's letters. *The World I Live In* is out of print. And Laura Bridgman is all but forgotten. Is it possible that we shall lose these two amazing histories?

They seem almost a single history. Within half a century, two infant females in rural settings were struck totally deaf-blind by twenty-four months and, exceptionally, suffered no accompanying physical or mental disability. Both grew into attractive little girls—but dumb, dependent, and barely socialized into an overstrained family. At the age of seven, both girls encountered a teacher-savior who imposed firm discipline and trained them to communicate through the manual alphabet. In both cases, this breakthrough to communication gained worldwide attention as a near-miracle of education and fortitude. It is probable that if either girl had been congenitally deaf-blind, the miracle would not have occurred. To an unknown degree, they were both able to rely on early stages of learning while normal. It is very difficult to say which of the two girls was the more intelligent.

FOR ALL THEIR similarities, however, Laura and Helen cannot be assimilated to one compound case history. Howe had a plan for Laura, which entailed close supervision, systematic instruction in many standard school subjects, and systematic avoidance of other subjects, in which she should be left free to develop "naturally" according to her innate capacities. Laura was Howe's private enterprise, to be kept within his institution as a scientific experiment under controlled conditions. But Helen and Annie, locked together like Siamese twins by their constantly talking hands, threw themselves directly into the world and the fullness of experience—from eating flowers to hugging trees to riding horses to traveling in trains. Curriculum and schedule fell by the wayside. Annie's instruction released Helen's lust for life. As a result, Helen learned finger-spelled English as if it were a new sense organ,

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an unexpected proxy for both sight and hearing. She was devouring books in Braille long before she reached age ten. She became a writer, and published over a dozen books.

And there lies the rub. Did the language that Helen Keller learned, stripped of sound and rhythm and inflection, verified only by touch yet extended by many writings that described a world of visual and aural sensations—did this language free her from what Dickens called the "marble cell" of deaf-blindness? Or did her intensely valued language, her lifeline, paradoxically imprison her in a different sort of prison house of language? By what right could she say "sunset," or "fireworks," or "opera"? Had Laura and Helen learned "mere words," whose physical and social referents they could never examine? Laura astonished her audiences with her geographical knowledge of river systems and mountain ranges that she had never seen and would never visit. (Howe had her learn a large portion of the common school curriculum without leaving her desk at the Perkins School.) But it was Helen Keller's published writings that repeatedly raised the issue of a "false self" and "false knowledge" created by an environment made entirely of words.

When she was eleven, Helen composed in Braille a story called "The Frost King," which she sent to Michael Anagnos, Howe's son-in-law, at the Perkins School. When he published it in the alumni magazine, it was recognized as copied, in places nearly word-for-word, from a published story that had probably been read to Helen three years earlier. She did not recall the fact. Within the Perkins community, the ensuing scandal about the possibility of plagiarism traumatized Helen and outraged Annie. Could a seriously handicapped girl of eleven have intended to pass off someone else's composition as her own? But a different question might also have been asked: Did she possess an adequate sense of the meaning of originality?

The "Frost King" episode was never fully resolved. Twelve years later, when *The Story of My Life* received generally favorable press, a few critics questioned not so much her originality as her authenticity. "All her knowledge is hearsay knowledge; her very sensations are for the most part vicarious." This criticism appeared in *The Nation* and was reprinted in *The New York Post*. It was this rebuke to which Helen devoted a large portion of *The World I Live In*. She explained that in her view our senses interpenetrate and feed one another. Through the power of imagination based on others' descriptions of the physical world, and thanks to the correspondences and analogies that link together the far-flung parts of the world, inner and outer, Helen claimed she could without falsification use the verbs "see" and "hear."

But the carping continued. When *Midstream: My Later Life* appeared in 1929, it provoked the reviewer for the *New York Herald Tribune* into protesting: "But Miss Keller has never seen the moon and never seen a scarf. She doesn't know what pink is." In a few books about the blind by psychologists and neurologists, Helen Keller was seen as "the dupe of words," the victim of "word-mindedness," someone practicing "implicit chicanery" because she had been victimized by her teacher's methods. Could the angel be a fraud after all? Many people defended Helen's integrity; but the charge of being a charlatan precisely because one has, in the face of profound handicaps, attained a vivid command of a common language, does not fade rapidly. Keller's greatest accomplishment threatened to become her greatest handicap.

By now we may begin to recognize how complex a set of contradictions surrounds and embeds these two cases. These girls who seemed less than human came to seem more than human. Howe, a medical doctor running a school for the blind, presented Laura as a challenging psychological and educational experiment, and he succeeded in "deciding the question so often asked, whether a blind-mute could be taught to use an arbitrary language." That is the way Howe, writing in 1857, described Laura's accomplishment of the 1830s and 1840s. At the same time all of Howe's reports reveal his wish that Laura would discover the notions of deity and soul for herself, naturally, by a spontaneous revelation. For there had to be something divine about this child. Everyone felt it. She would show us the truth and smite down Calvinist error.

The man who was most concerned with Helen Keller's early training was also a scientist. Like Samuel Gridley Howe, Alexander Graham Bell knew the manual alphabet and could talk directly to this beautiful and hugely deprived creature. He regarded Annie's inspired instruction as a successful experiment. Bell's deepest hope as a speech therapist and elocutionist was to persuade Helen and Annie to develop Helen's vocal apparatus so that she could speak orally. But what the pair had accomplished already impressed Bell beyond the realm of therapy and scientific progress. This unpretentious and generous inventor was reported as saying: "I feel that in this child I have seen more of the Divine than has been manifest in anyone I ever met before."

There is nothing strange or new about the mixture of religious sentiments, sublimated infatuation with a lovely prepubescent girl, and dedication to a scientific case history. In both Laura's and Helen's cases, the public responded to the rich blend of circumstances by transforming news into legend. And so it is little wonder, especially in respect to Helen Keller's sixty-year semi-official public presence as virtue embodied, that some critics wanted to puncture the legend.

And there is another contradiction that merits mention. The condition of deaf-blindness, when it occurs before the lingual stage beginning around twenty-four months, and even more so when it is congenital, seems to lead off the map of the human condition into the furthest terra incognita of isolation and incapacity. These regions overlap autism, monstrosity, insanity, and confinement. Where there is only silence and darkness, can there be real human life? Laura and Helen escaped this fate by sustained resolve and effort on their part, and on the part of their mentors: perhaps we are right to call their stories miracles. And yet, in spite of their status as disabled and deprived persons dealt with through radical courses of treatment or confinement, the deaf-blind lead us less to an extraterritorial island of exile than to the very heartland of the human.

Indeed, their predicaments and their accomplishments broach many quandaries of contemporary culture. We would do well to recognize them not as freaks but as revealing exceptions, capable of mobilizing around them enterprising people, powerful ideas and institutions, significant research, and the making of myth. In Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller, and in other deaf-blind persons variously restored to language, what is eccentric circles back to what is central. For they oblige us to ask many powerful questions of ourselves.

To what degree do we think in words? Can we think without words? Are we all (and not only the deaf-blind among us) entirely creatures of language? Are we subject to the "false self" of the words that construct our world? Are we endowed with innate capacities or tendencies—language, or reason, or conscience, or faith? If learning a conventional language subjects us to a form of social determinism, and if biological inheritance subjects us to a complementary form of genetic determinism, is there any room left for individual agency, for free will?

To such questions the case histories of Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller do not provide abstract philosophical answers, or statistics from which to generalize. Instead they afford us idiographic knowledge—the truth of the specific occurrence,

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which can be lost in the process of scientific abstraction and statistical generalization. This aspect of knowledge directed toward the particular was beautifully caught in Helen Keller's calm communiqué out of the dark: "Philosophy is the history of a deaf-blind person writ large."

IV.

THERE HAVE NOW appeared two fine books on Laura Bridgman and her mentor, following quickly on the appearance of a clear-eyed biography of Helen Keller and her teacher. Fortunately, all three biographers are eclectic historians willing to chronicle the motleyness that makes the world go round: these books benefit from a wide aperture, without running to excessive length. Each one, without sacrificing critical acumen, arises from an act of recognition and sympathy. The three books reveal that, behind their crushing disabilities, Laura and Helen were both fully endowed women: emotional, enterprising, unafraid, highly intelligent, playful. One is tempted to ask if they attained such a fully developed character in spite of their disabilities or because of them. And how much of their appeal and their significance lies in the fact that they were women?

Ernest Freeberg begins with social history. He examines the argument of some contemporary Americanists that the reform movement which founded asylums and schools and prisons in nineteenth-century America was driven by a resolve to impose control over threatening social disorders in the wake of Jacksonian populism. Freeberg wisely declares that genuine philanthropic purposes and the sincere hope of social progress had greater importance than the hunger for social control. He examines the intellectual background of French and Scottish philosophers from whom Howe drew his ideas and procedures for training Laura. Freeberg does not hesitate to show where Howe touches up the progress of Laura's training; but he gives full credit to Howe as the first to train a deaf-blind person to communicate. (Freeberg does not tell us that when Howe stated that there were "no precedents to go by," he should have acknowledged Diderot's suggestions in "Letter on the Blind" in 1749, which Howe knew and admired, and Itard's fully documented—and finally unsuccessful—course of training to teach the Wild Boy of Aveyron to read and to speak.)

Freeberg comes increasingly to paint the story of Laura and Howe in dramatic, even tragic terms. Virtually deprived of sensory experience, Laura could not develop her ideas by associating sensations, as Locke and the empiricists say we must. Her mind had to develop from within, according to its innate tendencies—unless extraneous ideas crept in through language. Howe strictly controlled Laura's program until he went abroad for a year and a half on his wedding trip. During that interval, religious terms and ideas found their way into Laura's mind: the damage was done. Her later conversion to an evangelical Baptist church shattered Howe's hopes that in the absence of religious indoctrination she would herself discover a form of "natural" religion.

A certain sadness hangs over the final pages of Freeberg's book, as if he, too, must somehow fail to encompass the full dimensions of his undertaking. "In the end," he writes,

> these attempts to resolve age-old questions about human nature by probing the experience of a single handicapped individual seem doomed to failure. A sampling pool of one person, struggling against severe liabilities, can hardly be used to draw meaningful conclusions about all of humanity. And, as Howe realized, our moral responsibility to help the disabled imposes sharp limits on this line of research, protecting people who desperately need the stimulation of social interaction, not the further isolation of a laboratory.

By underestimating the scope of his own project, Freeberg has misunderstood a

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major premise of the humanistic tradition. A single case may not "resolve age-old questions about human nature," but one outstanding individual, by her actions and by her thoughts, may illuminate those questions more vividly than a large sampling pool treated statistically. We continue to learn about ourselves from Socrates and Jesus, from Marcus Aurelius and Montaigne, from Victor the Wild Boy Aveyron and from Laura Bridgman. Idiographic knowledge, gleaned from thorough familiarity with a single instance, and furnished in the form of a story or a case history or a biography, certainly competes on an equal footing with the knowledge gleaned from generalizing about partial familiarity with many cases. In his closing pages Freeberg seems to lose confidence in the very faith that supported the years of investigation and writing he devoted to Bridgman and Howe. He brings the story into clear focus and supplies the rich historical background to go with it—and almost loses his nerve.

ELIZABETH GITTER HAS a different set of hesitations and vacillations. She knows that her book tells a compound story about two people: "She created his life, just as he created hers. Together, they earned a place in history." Yet her title, *The Imprisoned Guest*, and her opening reference to Laura as "the perfect Victorian victim-heroine," prepare us for the fact that she will make sure Laura has "her say." Gitter casts a somewhat feminist eye upon Bridgman. To be sure, Laura has a place in women's history and in the history of the disabled; but that is hardly the most significant point of regard from which to view this rather special kind of imprisonment. Fortunately, once launched onto Laura's story, Gitter sticks to it, and does not subordinate her account to political causes.

Gitter's book is longer and more detailed than Freeberg's, and does not hesitate to criticize the way Howe manipulated Laura and the facts of her training as he recorded them in his annual reports to the Perkins trustees. "In the light not only of Howe's idealizing," Gitter remarks, "but also of the relentless pressure on her to live up to her image, Laura's feistiness is surprising." And Gitter quotes Laura's abrupt, marginally grammatical communications to show her spirit: "Doctor [Howe] was wrong to open little girl's letters. Little girls open theirself." Even without a powerful command of language, Laura was not to be pushed around. Gitter's closing sentence echoes Laura's feistiness: "Through all her sorrows and disappointments, Laura managed to remain her unalterable self: witty, irritable, curious, demanding, and, in her way, brilliant." Gitter makes Laura come to life as a fully rounded person. She learns, she grows up, she bridles at her routines, she makes friends, she finds a precarious independence from Howe, her virtual creator.

Like Freeberg, and like Howe himself, Gitter fails to emphasize that Howe was trying to carry out two incompatible experiments at once. One was to teach Laura enough language to compensate for her enormous sensory deficit and to restore her to effective communication with others. The other was to restrict what she "heard" about religion, soul, and death, so that no traditional or popular beliefs would reach her. Since Laura was gregarious and inquisitive, the first experiment made a shambles of the second. She picked up religious gossip everywhere. At first Howe blamed everyone else for the leaks, but later he allowed himself to say that things had worked out just fine: "It was a source of the highest satisfaction and pleasure that ... alone and unaided she sought her God, and found him in the Creator." But if he had really believed in his success, he would have collected his annual reports and written his book on Laura.

LAURA BRIDGMAN AND Helen Keller became deaf-blind at approximately two years of age, and began systematic, disciplined training in language at about seven. Laura's training continued until she turned twenty, after which time she established a self-reliant and regular life as a resident of the Perkins school. Helen's education never stopped, and her varied career as a writer, a public performer of her own story, and a publicist for political and philanthropic causes allowed her to travel widely, to become a celebrity, and to appear to have a large degree of independence. Yet she was acutely aware of her dependence on others: on Annie, on her mother, on several generous men who helped to support her, on a series of devoted female companions. Dorothy Herrmann's biography vividly tells this story and evokes its characters with great skill. It is a balanced and reliable account, which occupies a median position between Van Wyck Brooks's brief and anecdotal *Helen Keller: Sketch for a Portrait* (1952) and Joseph Lash's immense, admirable, and slightly disheveled *Helen and Teacher* (1984).

Herrmann looks beyond the plaster saint and the carefully groomed, socially presentable freak. She expresses a certain ambivalence about Helen's true status. A chapter called "The Eighth Wonder of the World" deals with Helen and Annie's trip north after the first dazzlingly successful year of language training. Early reports from the Perkins School had made them famous at the respective ages of eleven and twenty-five. They were invited to visit President Cleveland at the White House. Alexander Graham Bell could barely restrain his admiration for the lovely pair. And so on. But at the end of the chapter on Helen and Annie's triumphs, Herrmann is reduced to growling.

> Five short years after her amazing breakthrough, Helen Keller was still in chains. Her new jailers were the very people who purported to help her communicate with the outside world, but who fought to possess her as if she were an exotic specimen. Completely helpless, a true victim, she had emerged from her lightless, quiet dungeon to enter a society that accepted a handicapped person only if he or she was physically unrepulsive, intellectually and morally superior, and heroic about their affliction.

A "luxurious captive": Herrmann accepts the phrase as accurate about Helen's mature years. But there were times—the four years when Helen and Annie and Annie's husband John Macy inhabited the house in Wrentham near Boston, and her final years, which she called "the fun years," of mink and martinis—that were in no sense a captivity. And Herrmann also insists, quite rightly, on Helen's resolve not to be like everyone else, not to be as normal as possible. Herrmann quotes a letter from Helen, barely twenty, to Charles T. Copeland, her writing professor at Radcliffe. Copeland had encouraged her to write about her own special world. It was something of a turning point for Helen: "I have always accepted other people's experiences and observations as a matter of course. When I came to your class last October, I was trying with all my might to be like everybody else.... Henceforth I am resolved to be myself, to live my own life, and write my own thoughts when I have any...." Helen kept her resolve most aggressively in politics. Her left-wing associations almost made her a target in the McCarthy hearings.

So the dilemma remains, the ambiguity that gives a curious iridescence to Herrmann's book and to almost everything about Helen Keller and Laura Bridgman. Had these two attractive, intelligent, and incorrigibly inquisitive girls been restored by demanding and resourceful teachers to the fullness of human existence? Had they been born again through language and communication to respond to the wonders of the world and to the presence of other people around them? Or were they tailor's dummies trained to act out

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the roles that they had learned through the categories of an artificial language? People remarked on the animation and the expressiveness of Helen's blue eyes. But they were glass inserts. How could Laura and Helen be anything other than prosthetic people? They saw and heard nothing around them, and yet they disported themselves as if nothing was lost on them.

V.

THE FEMINIST REDISCOVERY of women's literature has not, to my knowledge, recognized Helen Keller as a figure of historical importance. Much of the same can be said about the treatment of Laura Bridgman's case at the hands of several generations of philosophers of language, linguists, and developmental psychologists. Lev Vygotsky's seminal *Thought and Language* (1934), for all its literary examples and its attention to "inner speech," never mentions either Bridgman or Keller. Oliver Sacks's ebullient book about the deaf and the marvels of their sign language, *Seeing Voices* (1989), mentions Keller once in passing and ignores Bridgman entirely. I do not recall that Benjamin Lee Whorf, Eric Lenneberg, or Noam Chomsky find occasion to discuss either case. Only Ernst Cassirer, in *An Essay on Man* (1944), insists on their pertinence to his examination of the role of language in the evolution of animal into human.

> Nature itself has here, so to speak, made an experiment capable of throwing unexpected light upon the point in question. We have the classical cases of Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller, two blind deaf-mute children, who by means of special methods learned to speak ("communicate" would be a better word). Although both cases are well known and have often been treated in psychological literature, I must nevertheless remind the reader of them once more because they contain perhaps the best illustration of the general problem with which we are here concerned.

(It was largely from Cassirer that Walker Percy learned that his own fascination with language was embodied most completely in what he called alternatively "the Delta Factor" and "the Helen Keller phenomenon." In *The Message in the Bottle*, Percy described Helen's revelation at the water pump as a unique breakthrough from animal to human.)

How, then, after general neglect of the cases in the twentieth century (with Joseph Lash's double biography as the great exception), can we account for the nearly simultaneous appearance of a new life of Helen Keller and two books designed to put Laura Bridgman and Dr. Howe back on the historical and cultural map? The improved status since the 1970s of the handicapped and the disabled surely has something to do with it. The Americans with Disabilities Act, passed in 1990. has helped to establish the DB-Link, a national clearinghouse for the deaf-blind and their caregivers. From three locations—including the Perkins School—it offers information, advice, and assistance by means of its website, its newsletter, and its devoted staff. The Perkins School has recently published a volume called *Remarkable Conversations*, edited by Barbara Miles and Marianne Riggio, as a comprehensive practical guide to the training of different categories of the deaf-blind. Its three hundred pages overflow with illuminating contemporary case histories. (Strangely, the book pays minimal attention to Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller: special education has become a professionalized bureaucracy that sometimes neglects its own long and fascinating history.)

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN special education and the deaf-blind is evident. Other connections with contemporary debates may escape our notice. A deaf-blind person, deprived of all input from the two senses most important for communication, challenges us to scrutinize the nature of the human mind and how it develops. The deaf-blind, in other words, carry us to the problems of cognitive science, which they may even help us to understand. There are two theories of the mind currently loose in the land: that the mind is like a computer, an essentially cybernetic entity; and that the mind is structured like a language, an essentially psycholinguistic entity.

But consider this episode from Laura Bridgman's history. While she was training eleven-year-old Laura Bridgman, two weeks before Dickens's momentous visit, Mary Swift Lamson recorded that the death of a Perkins student provoked in Laura an early memory from a period at home before she had learned any language. Lamson gave Laura's own words: "I thought about I was afraid to feel of dead man before I came here, when I was very little girl with my mother; I felt of dead head's eyes and nose; I thought it was a man's...." Lamson called attention first to the traumatic nature of the incident and then, like an amateur psycholinguist, to the import of the first and last verbs. "Does not this little sentence," she asked, "settle beyond dispute the question, 'Can we think without words?'"

Well, no, the dispute has not been settled; but such an incident helps to explain our philosophical fascination with these two cases. A mature Helen Keller, looking back at her speechless self when she was seven, raised the same question about how she understood, when given a hat, that she was being taken outside: "This thought, if a wordless sensation may be called a thought, made me hop and skip with pleasure." It is a received idea in medicine, after all, that the pathological will usually have a revealing light to shed on the normal—a notion that is somehow related to the belief that adversity endured leads to humanity enhanced. Laura and Helen and indeed Annie displayed moral stamina in circumstances more credible than the circumstances of Oedipus and Job. For this reason, their stories are utterly exceptional; and for this reason, their stories are pertinent to our ordinary lot in life.

In 1857, Howe published a new account of how, for months, with no success, he gave Laura exercises to establish an association between the letters B-O-O-K and the object itself. How did he avoid discouragement? "It was as though she were under water," he explained, "and we on the surface over her, unable to see her, but dropping a line, and moving it about here and there, hoping it might touch her hand, so that she would grasp it instinctively. At last it did touch her hand, and she did grasp it; and we pulled her up to the light; or rather, she pulled herself up." This brief parable, which puts one in mind of Jesus's promise that "I will make you fishers of men," goes a long way toward explaining why these two deaf-blind girls deserve a lasting place among the stories that we tell and retell. They are redemption stories.

And Plato, too, comes to mind. These women actually lived the parable of the cave. At the opening of Book VII of the *Republic*, Socrates introduces the tale with a sentence that seems to lead directly into the universe of Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller: "'Next, then,' I said, 'make an image of our nature in its education and its want of education....'" There follows the famous parable, in which some individuals may gain freedom to turn away from the shadows playing on the wall to regard the objects that cast the shadows, and even to seek out the source of light. Plato's fable was political, and concerned the training of a ruling class. But what difference is there, really, between the "marble cell" that Dickens witnessed and the cave of the ancient philosopher? The great writer's excitement was not out of place. He had come upon and recognized the most primal human scene of all. ■

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NEW YORK DIARIST

Burst

ON TUESDAY MORNING, September 11, from my window in lower Manhattan, I watched the twenty-first century begin. Of that I am certain. What I don't know is how to convey what I saw: two commercial aircraft slam into the World Trade Center, followed by the conflagration and collapse of the buildings. Where there was once something—elegant, soaring, confident—there is now nothing. The twin towers, symbol of the world's capital, are a void, filled as I write with smoke billowing from the rubble. We have been offered a glimpse into a possible future.

IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, WAR was made *on* civilians. In the twenty-first century, war will be made *by* civilians. It will be the definitive "faith-based initiative," requiring neither guns, tanks, ships, planes, nor missiles. Like other faith-based initiatives it will bypass the conventional state. All it will need is planning skills and a willingness to die for your beliefs. Everything else—machinery, technology, targets—will be furnished by civil society, its victim. The point of such warfare will not be to achieve an objective, much less to win a final victory. It will be—it already is—simply to make a point.

IN HIS TELEVISED SPEECH ON TUESday night, President Bush misunderstood this completely. "They cannot dent the steel of American resolve," he asserted. But "they" were not trying to dent the steel of American resolve. They wanted to knock down the World Trade Center and blow up the Pentagon, and they succeeded. Their point was very well-made: The United States is vulnerable. When Mao Zedong first called the United States a "paper tiger," he knew he was whistling in the dark. But today is different. The contrast between American military bombast and the country's real exposure is palpable; until Tuesday morning, however, it was not understood by Americans themselves.

IN RECENT YEARS AMERICANS HAVE watched a spate of movie epics in which the United States wins World War II single-handedly and with valiant aplomb; in an earlier cycle, muscle-bound, bare-chested American heroes, wrapped (often literally) in the Stars and Stripes, refought the Vietnam War and other wars to U.S. advantage. I have watched some of these films in cinemas and on television—in Europe, in countries and among people well-disposed toward Americans. The commentaries have not been flattering. Elsewhere the temptation has been growing for years: to see in the bubble of American preening and pride an irresistible invitation to prick.

THIS URGE TO HUMILIATE THE United States has been made still more attractive by contemporary American reluctance to contemplate death in war. For all committed terrorists, now and in times past, death is an acceptable fee for a successful mission. For today's faith-based terrorists, it is the preferred price—the reward. Western European states, which accept military casualties as the price of resolve and have grown accustomed to a limited risk of civilian death, understand this mentality and partly for that reason make unsatisfactory symbolic targets. But Americans have made a virtue—some might say a fetish—of risk-free war. The special delight taken in causing large numbers of American deaths should thus not be underestimated.

THE AMERICAN DOMESTIC RESPONSE is of anxious disorientation. Europeans, faced with a terrorist campaign, typically ask, "Why *does* this happen?" Every American I have spoken to or heard on television in the immediate aftermath of the catastrophe has demanded, "How *could* this happen?"—i.e., who *let* this happen?—as though the default position in modern life were 100 percent personal and collective security. Will this now change? Are we, after Pearl Harbor and the assassination of JFK, watching the end of American innocence—so often announced, so long postponed?

IT IS TOO SOON TO SAY. BUT SOMEthing at least will be gained if three lessons are learned in Washington. The first is that the obsession with "missile defense" is a monstrous dereliction of duty. To be sure, there may be criminal states and obsessed individuals who dream even now of firing off an intercontinental missile. But that is their least likely weapon of choice, precisely because it so clearly advertises its point of origin and its owner. If I am right and the threat in coming decades is from men and organizations that want to make a point and mock and humble their adversary, then missile defense expenditure is a criminal waste.

THE SECOND LESSON CONCERNS THE Middle East, the most likely source of such attacks now and in coming years. Like it or not, Israel is seen from Morocco to Pakistan as a surrogate for the United States. What Israel does, America will be blamed for. Israel will be the excuse and the catalyst for attacks on America. This will not change. The United States is thus not an optional presence in the Israel-Arab conflict, a great power that can choose, as the Bush administration has chosen, to fold its arms and step back from the front. When Israel applies tactics of which Washington disapproves—as it has done on recent occasions—it is America, as much as Israel, that becomes a target. That is no reason to abandon Israel to its fate. It is time to make a virtue of necessity—since this is America's conflict willy-nilly, it is in our interest to get in there and find a way to peace.

THE THIRD LESSON IS THE MOST important one. On Tuesday evening, Republican Senator John Warner, of the Senate Armed Services Committee, stood in the Pentagon and declared: "We call upon the entire world to step up and help." And so it will—as most of the rest of the world well knows, we are all in this together. But American officials have spent the last few months denouncing treaties, promising a U.S. retreat from crisis zones, and explaining that the administration plans to put "U.S. national interests" first. It is good to hear conservative American politicians acknowledge that American national interests and those of the rest of the civilized world are utterly intertwined. But it would have been better if they had reached this conclusion a little sooner.

WE LIVE IN A GLOBALIZED POLITICAL era. It is not just the financial markets that know no frontiers (and it was not without significance that terrorists targeted the World Trade Center, whose very name they took as a standing challenge and reproof). American national interests have no meaning in isolation. Alliances, treaties, international laws, courts, and agencies are not an alternative to national security—they are its only hope. The rest is showy hardware and vain boasting. Will the present administration grasp this uncomfortable truth? I don't know, but I fear that it won't. It may be left to a future American leader, even to a new generation, to seize the full measure of this national disaster. There is a frightening, rubble-strewn emptiness where those proud towers stood just yesterday. A new era has begun.

TONY JUDT

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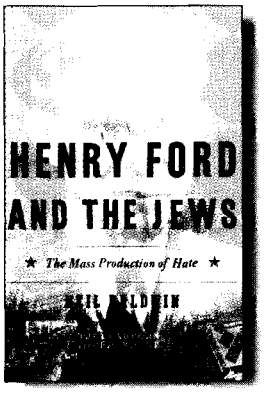

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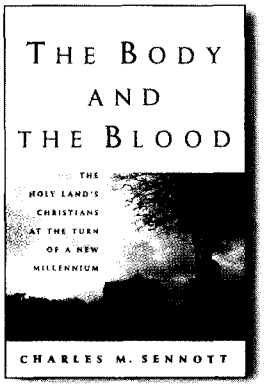

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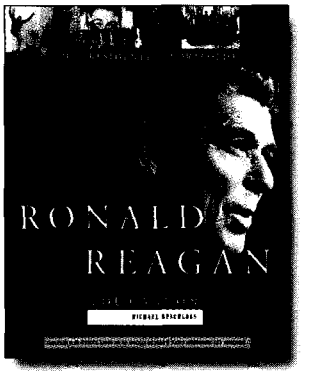

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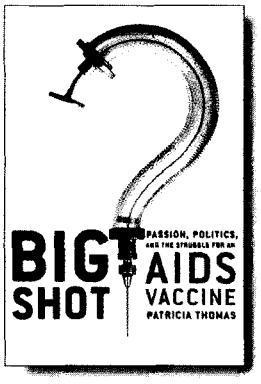

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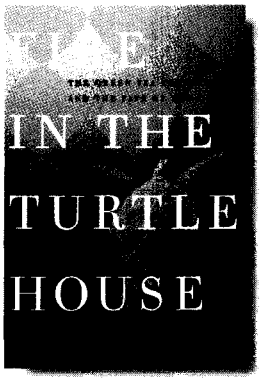

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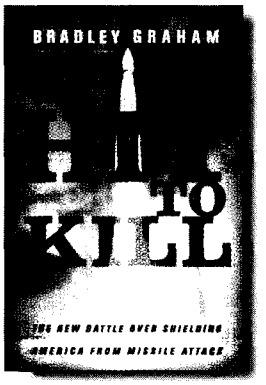

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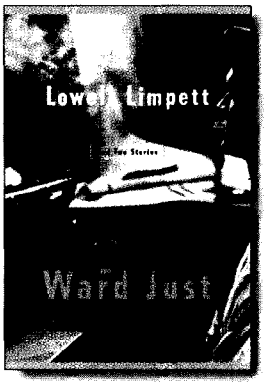

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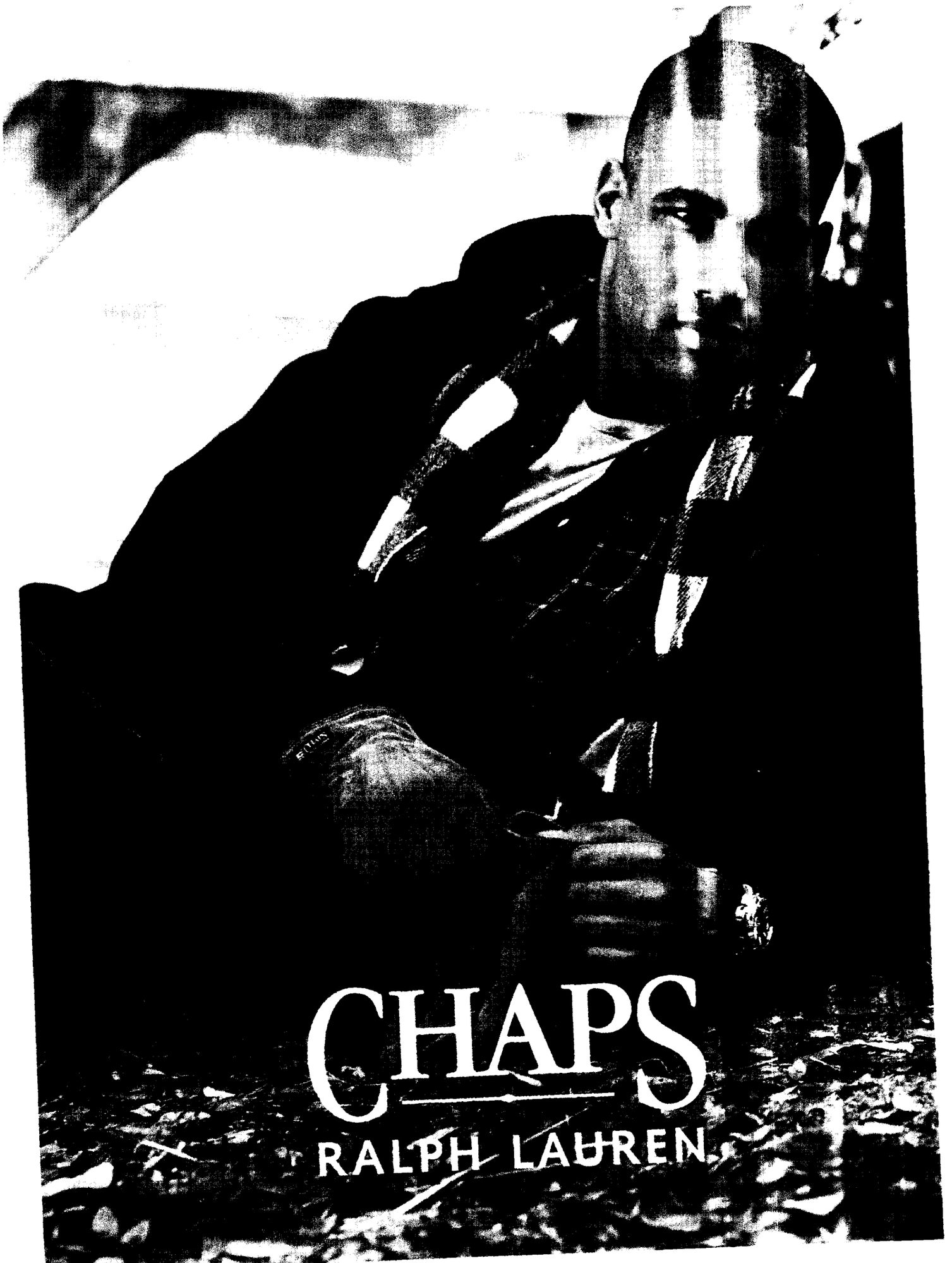

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